



Winter
2016

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Mouth of
the
River

Publication of
Oyster River High
Sch

adderall
addiction
& abuse at
ORHS
Pg. 3

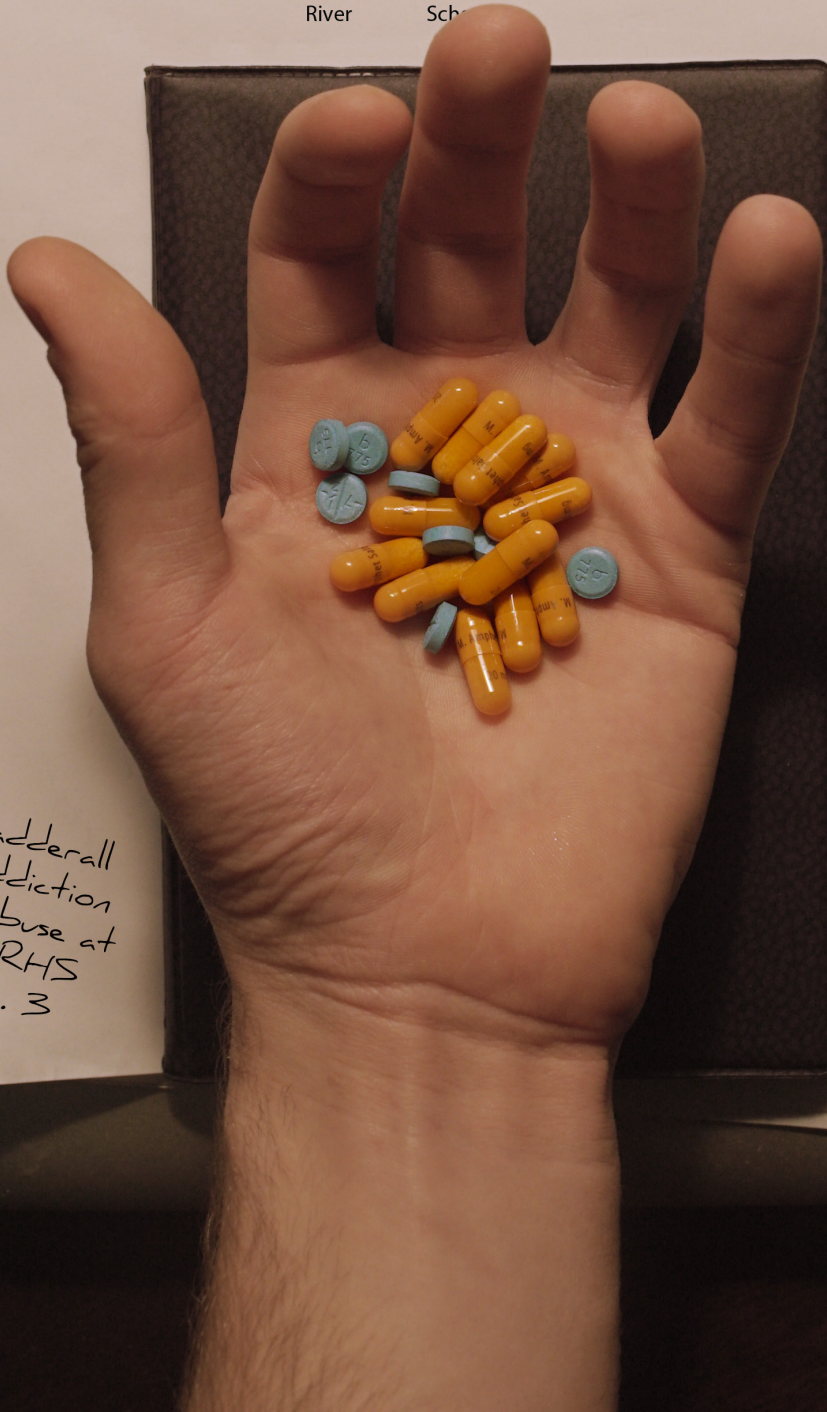


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Dear Readers,

I would like to thank you all for picking up this year's second issue of Mouth of the River! With this quarter's publication, we are undergoing serious changes in both the magazine's style and staff.

You may have noticed that we decided to take a different approach to the cover than we have in past publications. Instead of sticking with our typical style, we dedicated the front page to a specific article, that being the piece on Adderall abuse in high school. This was done to bring the utmost amount of attention to the article, as it is a serious problem facing schools nationally, locally and right here in Durham.

Since last year's transition to a more modern, magazine format, our staff has worked on perfecting the use of such a powerful medium. This quarter's release is no exception and we have put an incredible amount of effort into making this issue the most visually appealing and generally compelling one yet. With every publication, Mouth of the River has honed its own unique design and style to display our work in the best possible way. You may notice wider margins, sleeker use of negative space and an all around tasteful simplicity within the magazine.

Writing for Mouth of the River over the last year and, more specifically, the last two issues has been absolutely incredible. The environment of Mouth of the River is such that seeing yourself succeed is just as important as seeing everyone else on staff succeed. Ask anyone who has written for the magazine, and I guarantee that they will tell you it becomes a sort of family. Many of my greatest friendships have been created and fostered

over tedious layout design and desperate conversations at three in the morning, hours before final deadlines. There have been many days when Mouth of the River is the only thing that gets me out of bed in the morning, and it stands as one of the only elements of my high school career that will be missed.

It is for these reasons that I am truly saddened to have to say goodbye to the most amazing class I have ever taken, and the single most influential teacher from whom I have had the honor of learning from. I have made the decision to graduate early from high school, and pursue my dreams of working in film, photography & fashion. I am moving to New York City and working as an intern at the fashion/photo agency CLM, for the winter and spring. If all goes well, I will remain in Brooklyn and Manhattan for the foreseeable future.

As sad as this is for me, luckily Mouth of the River's co-editor in chief, Isabelle Todd, will take over and continue to bring the magazine to great places.

In the most sincere way possible, I thank you all. Thank you for your support of Mouth of the River's publication and, more importantly, thank you for the friendships, the heartaches, the parties and the most ridiculous high school experience one could ask for. I feel blessed to have attended Oyster River High School, but it is now time for me to move on to the next stage of my life,

With love, admiration & respect,

Conrad. C. Dundorf
Co-Editor in Chief

MOR Mission Statement

Mouth of the River seeks to reliably inform the student body, as well as the surrounding community, of interesting and newsworthy content in a modern, compelling format. Our goal as a staff is to give a voice to the students of Oyster River, and have it heard by any and all of our readers.

MEET THE STAFF



Isabelle Todd

Co-Editor in Chief, Features Co-Editor



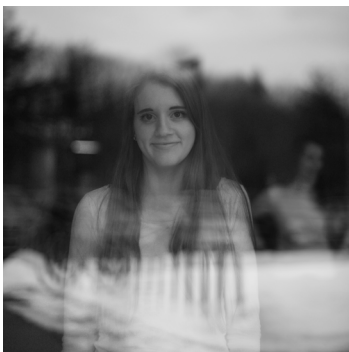
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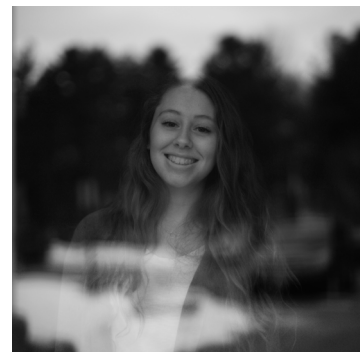
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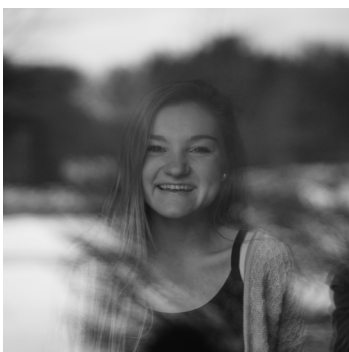
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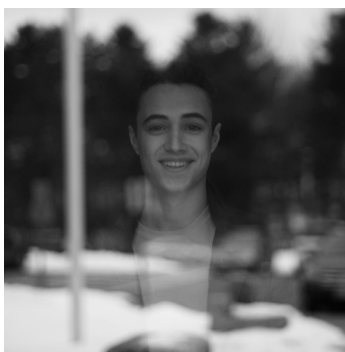
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by Conrad C. Dundorf



Dead ballpoint pens, dry eyes, a clock that reads “1:41 a.m.”, and an essay that still looms ahead. You only got home a few hours ago and had to shower and eat, but have been working through the load of responsibilities since then. Yet even with several cups of coffee, you are crashing fast. The evening is now giving way to morning, and sleep sharply beckons at your temples. You realize that there is no conceivable way in which you will be able to finish. Your head slumps and you rub at your brow, because while your brain cannot write a critical analysis paper, it can illustrate for you the consequences that will be apparent tomorrow. Dismayed, you manage to stand, and as you prepare to fall into your bed sheets, a splash of pastel color marks an alcove at the back of your desk. Having completely forgotten it was there, you step forward, pinch the pill between your index finger and thumb, and raise it to eye level. Having misplaced or forgotten it, the tablet’s black, printed text tells you to “not worry about your essay” and its 30mg dosage suggests a breezy all nighter. Smiling, you sit back down at your desk and send the pill down into your belly.

Adderall is used commonly by students in both high school and college, both legally and illegally. Although it is often perceived as benign, its nature is in fact greatly sinister. With side effects ranging from uncomfortable to fatal, the stimulant has found a nice home nestled amongst overworked students in our high school, as well as many others across the country.

Adderall, with its active ingredient being amphetamine salts, is a pharmaceutical prescription drug. While originally utilized during World War II to combat infantry’s battle fatigue and improve morale, it is now used to treat Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder and narcolepsy. Its properties cause wakefulness, and strong levels of drive and concentration to the highest degree, with effects lasting between 4 and 12 hours depending on the dosage. Adderall is now prescribed to children starting at the first signs of attention disorder through well into one’s adulthood.

Adderall can be ingested in a variety of ways. Most commonly, it is ingested in a pill or capsule, if it came with a prescription. It can also be snorted, injected or mixed into water based beverages.

No matter its method of consumption, it carries a host of potential repercussions, the first being its immediate health impacts. Adderall is a stimulant, which means that it has a direct effect on the heart and the cardiovascular system. With prolonged use, the wear on the user’s heart can be significant. This is even more so when the user is unprescribed and taking the drug at irregular intervals and dosages. One of the most prominent side effects, and uncoincidentally one of the main reasons people consume it, is the sleep deprivation. While on Adderall, the user not only feels no desire to fall asleep, but also physically cannot. Combined with the drug’s extremely addictive properties, users often find themselves fully awake for days on end. In addition to this, Adderall eliminates all appetite. This is not fixed by anything besides ceasing to take the drug, so weight and muscle mass can drop very quickly.

While its immediate health impacts are well known, Adderall also carries with it another effect. Because the drug is taken almost exclusively to ensure academic success, its widespread use is an indicator of a greater problem: that being how students

are managing their stress. “Adderall is beneficial in the worse way. It has become a common thing in high school and college because of our educational system’s emphasis on tests and [busy work],” states an anonymous user of the drug, who will be referred to as Harry. Harry continues to voice that, “that is why it is so popular: because nobody has an attention span of 4 hours.”

Due to the drug’s aforementioned effects, it has an incredibly high risk of abuse. And while there is no doubt that it is a fairly powerful stimulant, that is not why it is most commonly abused. “Adderall isn’t abused how many people may think it is,” Harry states. “You can certainly get high from it, but the people abusing it are not doing it for that reason. They are doing it to study and to prepare for school.” This relatively new reality has completely changed how schools are forced to deal with substance abuse and drugs. Unlike other controlled drugs, such as marijuana or alcohol, students are not consuming them for recreational reasons. The widespread use of Adderall seems to almost always be traced back to the concentration and focus that it causes.

Because the drug is abused almost exclusively for academic reasons, it is perceived differently from other illegal drugs by not only school figures, but also students taking it. This incredibly unique set of circumstances in which students are abusing the drug has led to many unpredictable outcomes, the first being how students view its use, and the second being how school’s administrations approach the policing of its use.

“It is different from other prescription drugs. Adderall isn’t viewed in a negative light,” states a second anonymous student, identified as Mary, who abuses the substance. “While other drugs usually come with a stigma, Adderall is associated only with productivity and dedication to school.” And this is where its true danger can be seen. Unlike weed, alcohol, or even harder drugs like cocaine and oxycodone, with their potential consumption comes the knowledge that they carry very adverse side effects. Adderall poses a different situation entirely. When teenagers are taking it, they are not thinking of its very real side effects. They are thinking of the tests that will be completed, the time saved and the general productivity that it will induce. These factors lead to its use among the top tier of the school, rather than “at risk students” that tend to be more likely to abuse controlled substances. And because of Adderall’s elusive and nontraditional fan base, the mitigation of its consumption by school administrations has been incredibly ineffective.

“When students take [most illegal drugs] in school, the effects of this would generally be very obvious,” states Mike McCann, the dean of students at Oyster River High School, “but with Adderall, it might not show up, and they may just be very focused.” This is true. In fact, one could go as far as to say that it is an understatement. While taking Adderall, the user is not subjected to the distracting or disruptive behaviors of recreational drugs. Instead, they are launched into a state of intense sobriety and clarity. Obviously, neither of these states of mind would ever concern educators, so the drug’s use goes entirely unnoticed, and little is done to stop its consumption.

There is no doubt that schools are doing their best to stop Adderall’s abuse among the student population, but it is entirely ineffective. Both Oyster River’s counseling office and

administration have stated that there has been no instance they can remember where they had to take disciplinary action involving Adderall abuse at school. This does not indicate a lack of resources or investment, but rather simply a lack of understanding as to how to approach the drug. Due to its sobering effects, and the associated increased work ethic, school administrations have an ineffective strategy in stopping its abuse. This is not necessarily an indication of poor policing or responsibility by school's administrations, but rather a demonstration of Adderall's completely unique effects.

Currently, Adderall use is monitored using the same giveaways and recognizable symptoms of use that are exhibited when taking recreational drugs. "It would be all the same," states Holly Malasky, Oyster River's student resource officer. "You are going to see changes in student's behaviors the same as you would if they were under the influence of marijuana or alcohol."

But given Adderall's use, this proves to be false. "Instead of the traits such as slipping grades, decreased work ethic and apathy that are generally associated with drug use, quite the opposite will happen," explains Logan, an anonymous user of Adderall. It is clear that in order to properly and effectively slow the drug's use among high schoolers, a unique approach must be taken, and it should be recognized for what it is: an incredibly addictive substance that is abused for its helpfulness in the schooling environment.

Even with Adderall's arsenal of side effects and implications, it also holds a larger ethical dilemma. Students without a prescription take the drug to stack all possible odds in their favor. Whether this is to cram study for an exam, power through a test or complete a lengthy essay, they are advantaging themselves. And because we attend a school with a large percentage of students who will later attend higher education, "there is an issue of fairness," says McCann. "Especially when there is a competition for resources, whether that be scholarships or admission to schools. If you are using [Adderall] without a medical need, you are cheating."

Students are using Adderall as a crutch to solve greater issues and problems that could likely be solved without it, and this is causing an inability to work around basic obstacles. "Students need to understand the value of failing," states Kim Cassamass, a counselor at Oyster River High School. "There is a lot to be learned about not doing well. Students need to build a resiliency and understand that if things don't go perfectly, it is going to be okay." But as important as this mentality is, it is not commonplace among high school students at Oyster River. To them, it is seen as a quick fix, a solution whose long list of risks is of no consequence.

But the truth is that the use of Adderall is actually really scary. There is no question about that. But looking past its risk of overdose, heart conditions, eating disorders and sleep deprivation, Adderall suggests something far more sinister. Many of the people prescribed Adderall have been given their monthly refills with very little need and because of this, we are entering uncharted territory, where millions of people are prescribed a drug that alters their brain chemistry in a significant way. And while many of these users are comforted by the label on their prescription, or the abundance of its use, it is at its heart a dangerous and addictive stimulant that ruins lives.

THE NEW STANDARD

BY NEVILLE CAULFIELD

In 2016, the SAT will be changing from its well-known structure into something new

Bring two number two pencils, non-mechanical and sharpened to a point, a water bottle and snacks, and a calculator that fits specific guidelines. Don't forget your extra batteries and photo Photo ID. Did you remember your admission ticket?

In 2016, the SAT will be changing from its well-known structure into something new. Very few things will go unmodified. From the essay, to the amount of possible answers on multiple choice questions, to the point system, this is an entirely new test. As the test changes, its role in the Oyster River School District will change too. All juniors will take the test during the school day instead of a state mandated standardized test that juniors have taken in previous years, such as NECAPs and Smarter Balance assessments.

Since 1926, the College Board has administered a standardized test to all high school students who choose to test their skills, aptitude, and general high school knowledge. Through time, its name has changed from the Scholastic Aptitude Test, to the Scholastic Assessment Test, to just the SAT, which now has no direct meaning as an acronym. Although its name has changed, the purpose and structure of the test have remained relatively similar, until now.

No matter the year, the SAT has always been something that sends shivers down the spines of high school juniors across the country, remembering horror stories told by their older siblings. In truth, the test itself is not all so terrible, but it is the weight that the score holds that keeps us up at night. In March of 2016, a newly revamped SAT standardized test will become the new top test for college admissions offices to look at.

Instead of consisting of three distinct sections: math, reading, and writing plus the essay, there will only be a math section and an evidence-based reading and writing section. The currently required essay will be optional, and multiple choice questions will only have four answer choices as opposed to five. Arguably the most distinct change in the test is that there will no longer be a penalty for guessing.

"I would definitely agree the SAT needed to be changed; I didn't think it was a fair representation of what people know. I also think their scoring method, which deducted points for guesses, was not ideal," said Payal Nanda ('16). Nanda is one of many seniors at Oys-

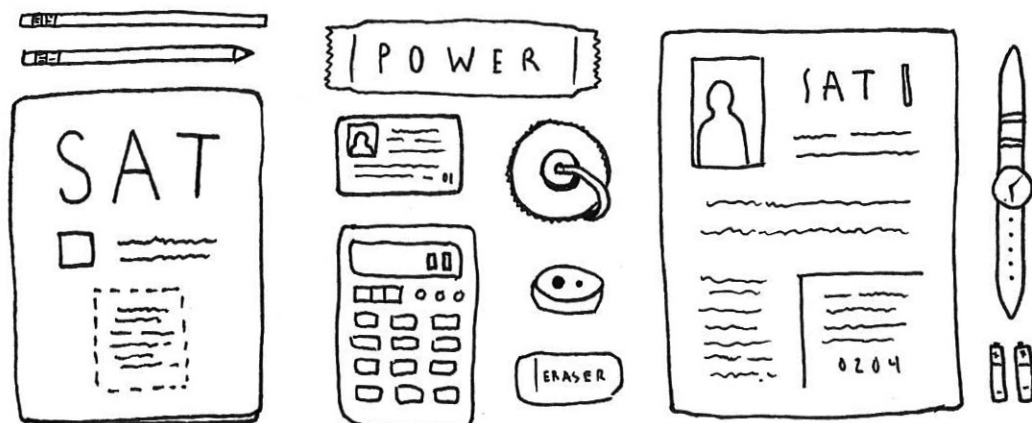
ter River High School, and at high schools all across the country, who have taken the "old" test and will not have the chance to try the new one and have their scores be applicable for fall 2016 college admission.

The stress of the old SAT starts well before the actual test begins, even if you didn't worry over studying at all. Everything about the test is structured over the top, leaving no room for questions, and no room for error. In an attempt to make the test a little more "friendly", the College Board whipped up a whole new format of test, aimed at being a better representation of the knowledge of high schoolers, no matter how well they may take tests.

For most opponents of the SAT, the issue is that the test does not fairly or accurately test the knowledge of students, or even a student's "readiness for college" as the test says it's designed for. Instead, the SAT has become more of a test of how much a student can study for the SAT, instead of important things such as quick problem solving, creative thinking, and general knowledge.

"I've heard that the test has become more of kids paying a lot of money to get good at taking the test and learning strategies, so the kids who can't afford as much prep are at a clear disadvantage," said Claire Genes ('17), who will be one of the many juniors across the country trying the new test for the first time. Because the SAT has come down to a test of patience and prep, it can be argued that students who have the funds to hire a tutor or sign up for an expensive prep class have quite an edge over students who are less fortunate financially. This completely defeats the purpose of the test being an equal assessment of knowledge and college readiness.

"I think that the SAT is basically just an annoying test that most high schoolers will have to take, but I also see its purpose as a singular, standardized test that easily compares students to one another," said Kathryn Lanoue ('16), who has taken the SAT three times. With all of the SAT's shortcomings, it still serves its primary purpose of allowing college admissions offices to make their first cut of their applicant pool based off of transcripts and their standardized test scores. Some smaller schools are making the test optional in their admissions process, as they look at lots of other aspects of their smaller application pool.



"I remember being rushed for time to complete my essay. Although I'm an above average writer, it didn't show through because of the time restraints," said ORHS alumna Ellen Sievert ('13), who remembers thinking that colleges should test the ability to create good, creative writing, instead of something pulled together under a short and strict time restriction.

"They are encouraging students to guess and challenge themselves. The idea is that the more you can answer the better off you are," said former ORHS Principal and current Assistant Superintendent, Todd Allen. "It's embedded a lot more of the college career readiness type concepts, including questions that involve critical thinking, problem solving, and analysis of data," he continued. These two sections will be graded on the same 200-800 point scale as the sections are now, and will still test your ability to perform under pressure as the test will remain four hours long.

Inside the test, the questions are changing as well. In the evidence-based reading and writing section, students will no longer be bombarded with having to know the meaning of ridiculously challenging and alien words. Instead, students will have to derive the meaning of words more familiar to them, based on their context. "I know the new SAT is becoming more like the ACT. I think I will like the new version better and I am looking forward to it since I thought the ACT was easier, aside from the science part (which won't be on the SAT)," said Megan Wu ('17), who has taken the old SAT, the ACT, and plans to take the new SAT in March.

Both the evidence-based reading and writing section and the math section will have more reading to do, with long word problems and larger passages. Although the sections themselves will be relatively similar to the old test, there's no saying just how close, which makes it

hard to study for.

"I was kind of stressed because even the tutors weren't sure what exactly was different," said Genes, who took an SAT prep class this past summer. Because this is a whole new beast, there will be no huge prep books with dozens of tests from past years, nor will there be any tutors with extensive knowledge on the subject. The best way to study for this new test is to pay attention in class, and read a lot. "Long term, I'm hoping that teachers will incorporate material from the new SAT into their everyday curriculum, so they won't have to stop [normal classwork] and prepare solely for the test," said Allen.

All juniors will take the new SAT for the first time at ORHS on March 2nd. They will not have classes, and the test will take up most of the day. "I've heard from the seniors that the smarter balance testing was horrible. From that, I'm glad that they've been replaced. I don't want to take any more standardized test than I have to," said Wu.

Allen hopes that students will be motivated to do well on this test more than they have been in the past on NECAP and Smarter Balance tests, as those did not affect the students themselves. "The SAT comes with many advantages and no disadvantages as far as I can see. First, most students at ORHS already take the SAT, given that 87% of our students go on to college. The SAT is a known test and comes with acceptance and support by educators, parents and students. It also takes two fewer hours to take than Smarter Balance," said Oyster River Cooperative School District Superintendent, James Morse.

Allen concluded his thoughts by saying, "The hope is that maybe a few kids who weren't initially thinking about college would take the SAT and do really well, and say, wait a minute, maybe I could reconsider that."



SAVED BY THE BELL

By Katie Schmitt

The monotonous ring of the alarm that has already gone off three times, but each time you hear the noise your immediate tendency is to hit the snooze button. Unfortunately, the third alarm is a warning that you only have 20 minutes until school starts. You stumble down the stairs, eyes barely open and your mind most definitely not attentive. Great start to another school day.

On December 16th, members of the Oyster River School District convened in the ORHS library to determine whether or not the starting time of the schools in the district will remain the same, or if a delayed opening will be implemented with the intention of providing students with a more sufficient amount of sleep.

Dr. James Morse, superintendent of the Oyster River School District, explains: "This has been an on-again-off again conversation for years, way prior to my arrival. A group of parents resurrected the conversation last year. They worked with middle school and high school administration and made a presentation to the School Board. The School Board wanted to carry the discussion to the teaching staff this year with the goal of reporting to the Board in December 2015."

Morse sent an email to faculty members mid November that consisted of two variations of time changes. These changes could be used for the Sau5 schools. (See infographic for

The most prominent reason for the proposal of the alternative school times is the research that has been conducted pertaining to students and their engagement in class when they are able obtain more sleep.

Some schools have begun to modify student's schedules to provide more sleep for students, such as Phillips Exeter Academy. Depending on student's schedule, the students arrive at school at varying times throughout the week.

"On days that I am able to sleep in more, I think that I do come to class a little bit more prepared. Not so much in an academic sense, but just in a personal preparedness way. It's nice to have mornings when I am not rushing out the door and can instead take time to get ready for the day. I don't usually take advantage of my entire sleep-in

for sleep, and like I said, usually use some time to just get organized for the day," says Tom Appleton, a student at Phillips Exeter Academy. PEA has modified their schedule and provided students with "sleep in days" to offer extra sleep under stressful circumstances.

Not only has this issue circulated throughout schools in New Hampshire, this controversial argument has acquired national attention.

There was an act proposed in September of 2014, referred to as "ZZZ's to A's" that would require all schools to begin their day no earlier than 8:40 AM. The act was proposed by the congressional research service, a nonpartisan division affiliated with the Library of Congress. The experiment was to be commenced by the secretaries of education in school districts nationwide, to compare the outcome of students' performance if start time was delayed.

Even without a concrete decision made pertaining to the starting time at Oyster River High School, many students have established some sort of opinion regarding the potential changes.

"I think that some people would be more engaged with more sleep," says Ana Szymanski ('19) who has an optimistic standpoint pertaining to the potential change in schedule.

Students have articulated their thoughts on sports and extracurricular activities as well. Caroline Wilson, Caroline Wilson, student representative of the Oyster River School Board has conversed with students about questions and requests.

"I've spoken to a lot a students about this, and the main concern they have voiced is sports. If the time was pushed back, students would have to leave school earlier for games, and practices would run later and later into the night. There are many pros and cons to changing times, but the overall student feedback I have received is negative," says Wilson, who attended the meeting December 16th to represent the students' perspectives.

The Portsmouth High School and Oyster River High School Districts have proposed the same ideas to the communities regarding the variation in schedules. Both schools have a similar incentive, and that would be to delay the school districts start times.

“Research overwhelmingly supports a later start for high school-aged students. Studies on the impact of sleep deprivation on learning, the “wiring” of an adolescent brain that keeps them alert and awake later in the evening, are a couple of examples. A later start would contribute to students being more alert and engaged in classes, which would help teachers as well as the students,” says Portsmouth High School Principal Mary Lyons.

Although with such a proposal, there is a counter argument opposing the later start times. The most significant counter argument would be students with procrastination. If the district permits the school day to start at a later time, there will be some students who see this as a “leeway” to further procrastinate and avoid prioritizing their obligations, such as homework.

“From what I have gathered, changing start times sounds like an advantage, but in reality, students may see getting to wake up later as meaning they could in return stay up later. I plan to voice the student’s opinion as best I can and bring these points to the table,” says Wilson.

Extracurricular activities are significantly encouraged throughout ORCSD whether that be in the form of a sports team, robotics club, math league, etc. This would then compromise the starting and finishing time of the extracurricular activities offered throughout the district.

“Our athletic director has been involved in these conversations. There will be some impact on after school activities. We will attempt to mitigate as much as possible the impact but there will be some impact on afterschool activities,” says Morse.

One of the other cons that can be affiliated with a delayed schedule does not necessarily pertain to students’ concerns, rather the district as a whole.

“The budgetary issues that will arise because of the changes in

the bus schedule. The only way to have the change be cost neutral is to change the elementary schools to an earlier start and I know there are some concerns with that,” says Lyons.

School districts are provided with enough buses to compensate for the number of students. For ORHS, 21 buses circulate Durham, Lee and Madbury and transportation is provided for students that live in those areas. The budgetary cost of buses will be compromised if delayed start times are implemented.

People have a strong tendency to want to keep things consistent, especially when they pertain to time and schedules. One of the additional counter arguments would be change in general.

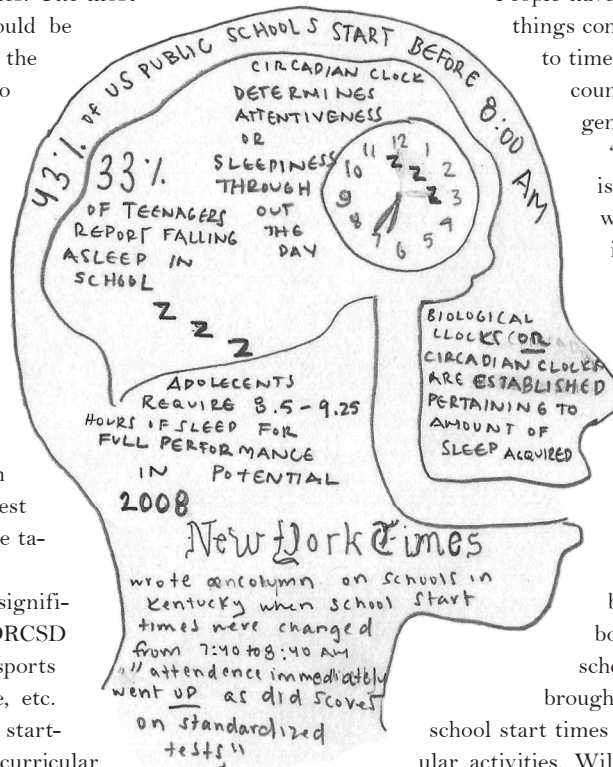
“As a parent, my child did not have an issue adjusting to an earlier start time when he entered middle school. I think it can be an adjustment for some children, but it eventually becomes the new normal,” says Jessica Whalen, Moharimet Elementary School physical education teacher, as well as mother of an elementary school student.

Students have been informed of the potential alterations that could be implemented to the schedule.

During the meeting on December 16th, the members of the school board conversed regarding the delayed schedule options. The prominent point brought up by the board was how delaying

school start times would affect sports and extracurricular activities. Wilson mentioned during the meeting, “everybody that I talked to does after-school activities and they are very worried about how their activities would be affected.”

The school board will vote for any changes that will be implemented. If the majority votes for either option A or option B, the school board will be responsible for not only voting for these changes, but publicizing any changes, and instating them. Further decisions regarding the start time will be made in the upcoming year of 2016.



Options Proposed by the School Board	High School/Middle School Schedule	Elementary School Schedule
Option A	8:35AM-3:30 PM	9:45AM-4:10 PM
Option B	8:45AM-3:40 PM	7:45AM-2:10 PM
Current Arrangement	7:35AM-2:30 PM	8:45AM-3:10 PM

Oil and Water

By Lydia Concannon



“Something like this reminds me of everything that we are capable of as people,” said local resident and attendee of the Oil and Water event, Carlee Beck.

On November 17th, activists, environmentalists and everyday people looking to hear an inspiring story gathered in an old mill building in Newmarket, NH, to hear about a story of triumph and passion.

The mood was set with dim lighting and small talk about different types of environmental issues. People came from all over the state to hear the story of three humble women and how they stopped a large company from building an oil refinery on Great Bay.

The year was 1973, and the country was in the midst of an energy crisis where oil was scarcely available. Aristotle Onassis, a wealthy Greek businessman and CEO of Olympic Oil, slowly started purchasing property along the shoreline of Great Bay. He told people that he was going to build residential housing. Little did the people of Durham know that

he was planning on building a \$600 million oil refinery which, if completed, would have been the largest in the world at the time. It would have devastated the delicate ecosystem within Great Bay and the whole area surrounding the bay would have been changed forever.

Three courageous women from the Great Bay area stood up to Onassis and let him know that the people of Durham would not be okay with his project following through. Dudley Dudley, a freshman state representative at the time, became aware of what was happening on the Great Bay. Dudley, now a nationally recognized environmentalist who has received numerous awards for her community service efforts, says her experience opposing the project has relevance today. “We had no funds, no organization and no experience in fighting huge corporate interests. But we had the truth, passion and community. In the end, we prevailed and protected our wonderful coastline and bay.”

Dudley, along with fellow environmentalists Phyllis Bennett and

Nancy Sandberg, was able to put a stop to the refinery. “We live in a beautiful place and I can’t imagine how terrible it would have been if those women hadn’t stood up for what they believed in. “I think it’s really inspiring and empowering that just a few really dedicated people stopped this thing from happening. You see that happening all over the world but it’s a lot more meaningful when it’s in your own backyard,” says attendee of the event and intern for the Grassroots Foundation, Madi Pelletier Murrill.

At the time, the story was first covered by a local newspaper called Publick Occurrences and the late publisher Phyllis Bennett reported that strangers were trying to buy large areas of land under the headline, “An Oil Refinery on Durham Point?” Without Bennett’s newspaper informing the public about the problematic oil refinery, the public might not have become fully aware of the issue.

A local group called Save Our Shores, and young housewives Nancy Sandberg and Sharon Meeker, rallied residents against the proposal. They convinced a Durham town meeting to reject zoning changes that would have permitted the refinery project to move ahead.

Sandberg states, “In late summer of 1973 many of my Durham Point neighbors and I became suspicious of the stories and the money being offered for our land by men in dark suits, driving dark cars. [Because of this] we formed the citizens group Save Our Shores.”

This is how the three women became aware of Olympic Oil’s plan to build an oil refinery on Great Bay. Over 3,500 acres of shoreline would have been taken up to build the refinery and the pipeline that was needed to create an estimated 400,000 barrels a day.

Great Bay is also home to many different species of wildlife and this project would have affected their homes. A study done by the Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems states, “The oil industry holds a major potential of hazards for the environment, and may impact it at different levels: air, water, soil, and consequently all living beings on our planet. Within this context, the most widespread and dangerous consequence of oil and gas industry activities is pollution. Pollution is associated with virtually all activities throughout all stages of oil and gas

production, from exploratory activities to refining.”

Dawn Genes, executive director of the Lamprey River Watershed Association, said, “Each of us can contribute something to helping to make the world a better place. We tend to be more inspired when the action is close to our homes or our hearts. Taking care of our natural resources – the land, the water – is essential and I love that I can work on these ideals.”

At the event in the mills three of the original activists, Dudley Dudley, Nancy Sandberg and Sharon Meeker, a member of Save Our Shores at the time, sat humbly in front of the eager crowd and shared their story about how they fought against a force that was bigger than them and won.

After the tales of their story came to an end multiple speakers came up to talk to the crowd about what can be done to protect the environment. One environmentalist was quoted as saying, “These women saved our shores. Now it is time to protect them.”

The story of the four local women and how they stopped a large company from building an oil refinery in Great Bay inspired many of the people that attended the event. “Seeing people who have done so much is really inspiring and it just reminds me that things like this are possible to do,” says Beck.

The story was so powerful it inspired Morgan Dudley, Dudley Dudley’s daughter, and Alfred Thomas Catalfo of Dover to write “Oil and Water”, a full-length, feature film script. It recently won the 2015 Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition for Drama, finishing ahead of more than 1,300 other international script entries. The story tells of the four women and how they defeated Onassis, who was one of the richest men in the world at the time. Since winning the Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition, Catalfo has heard from studio executives, agents and Hollywood production companies interested in the story. He’s working on a book version of the script as well.

This story has inspired many to stand up and fight for their environment, “And here it is forty years later and the story of Save Our Shores and the refinery battle still resonates with people who care about protecting our sense of community, our precious natural resources, and the value of government by the people and for the people,” says Sandberg.



Sharon Meeker, Nancy Sandberg, and Dudley Dudley speaking at the Oil and Water event.



Wagon Hill, a 139 acre area located in Durham, offers access to Great Bay and is a popular spot to visit.

Should earning an A in Physical Education be equivalent to earning an A in AP Calculus?

By Andrea Staples

Oyster River High School is currently a heterogeneous school which means that AP and advanced courses are not weighted and that all courses are viewed as equal when determining a student's GPA. This is due to the school embracing that all students have their own challenges however some students who take advanced courses feel as though this is unfair when determining class rank and college admittance. Although many different opinions have been formed on the matter, what is most important is knowing all of the facts.

How does ORHS currently determine class rank?

As senior year approaches, students begin to worry about what colleges will see on their transcript and how it will affect them. One aspect that students worry about is class rank and whether or not it is vital to their college admittance. Mark McCann, Dean of Students at ORHS states, "When you get into the top ten it gets a little sticky. It's [class rank] not a simple answer because everybody's challenge is a little different."

ORHS currently only releases the top ten in the senior class; this is because in the past they acknowledged the inequity of not weighting courses and did not want a student not making the top ten to negatively affect college applications. Releasing the top ten is also necessary to determine valedictorian, scholarships, and other titles. There is one main question many students continually ask, which is 'Why doesn't ORHS just weight advanced course?' Kim Sekera, guidance counselor states "Our school really embraces heterogeneity, the way our school is set up it's counter to weighted grades because we value the importance of everything."

The highest GPA (Grade Point Average) a student could achieve at ORHS is a 4.33. Currently if one student were to receive a 4.2 GPA taking no AP courses, meanwhile another student were to receive a 4.1 GPA while taking multiple AP courses, the student who took no AP courses would be chosen as first in the class for having a higher GPA. If an AP Course were to be weighted, then the GPA the student received for the course would be raised to a certain extent due to the rigor of the course, therefore 'balancing' with non-AP courses.

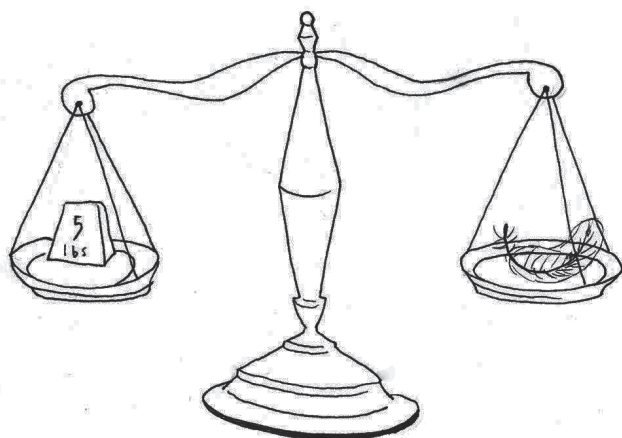
Are AP Courses worth it if they aren't weighted?

Everybody has their own challenges, but does that mean if you don't take on rigor in high school that you're going nowhere in life? Sekera thinks otherwise "My husband did not do good [well] in high school and he now has a PhD and is a professor. Our former superintendent dropped out of school and got his G.E.D. and a Doctorate." However, if a student is intending on going to college many expect students to challenge themselves in high school. "We value the students that are working super hard to take difficult courses and put in the time and effort to get good grades in them; it's very challenging to do so especially in AP courses," states McCann. However, how much a student can handle at ORHS is often overestimated.

Sekera states that many students can take on too much rigor at ORHS and end up being miserable. AP courses are not guaranteed to give you a college credit or guarantee your acceptance into your dream school. Whether or not a college will give a student credit for taking an AP course in high school depends on if the college is a higher tier school. "If you were to go into nursing they probably wouldn't care that you took the Anatomy and Physiology here even if you got the college credit because they want you to take theirs and for nursing the Anatomy and Physiology that they require is so specific that they wouldn't grant you the college credit," states Sekera.

Sekera further noted that ORHS is a very competitive school and that taking AP courses will help you regardless if you get the college credit due to the exposure to the course. Ella Cedarholm ('15), alumni of ORHS, encourages that if you are planning on using the AP Courses that you had taken in high school as college credits, to be sure to make sure it fits the requirement of your major. One of the AP courses Cedarholm took at ORHS was AP Physics, which is algebra based at ORHS. Meanwhile, her intended major which may be an Engineer

(Cedarholm is undeclared) requires her to take a Calculus based Physics, therefore she had to take physics again. "It's been nice not having to work as hard in it since I've already seen all of the content, and I didn't feel as screwed over when I got a bad professor for it, but the two courses [AP Physics at ORHS versus Physics at UNH] are so unnoticeably different," says Cedarholm.



Is being a heterogeneous school unfair to students who take AP or Advanced courses?

Some students who have taken AP courses disagree with the method class rank is determined at ORHS. Bella Saputo ('16) took one AP course her junior year, and is currently taking three other AP courses "I think that our unweighted system was created with good intentions as it is designed to treat each subject equally without putting more value on one over the other. However, the fact of the matter is that some classes are just harder than other classes and this does not make them any less valuable or necessary to a student's education."

Colleen Todd ('16) who is also in multiple AP courses supports ORHS being a heterogeneous school. "When you sign up for a course load that is rigorous, you are accepting the possibility of your GPA being lower than it would be in an average class that isn't advanced or at an AP level. If the classes were weighted then students that could not manage in accelerated classes would put themselves there and not truly learn the subject because they would get poor grades but due to the system have a high GPA," states Todd. As stated before, ORHS embraces equality among courses for students.

Does class rank affect college admittance?

According to an article on Grades, GPA, and Class Rank if a student were to avoid taking AP and Advanced Courses throughout high school that no amount of A's will impress a competitive college. ORHS is very diligent with presenting colleges with a school profile explaining the unweighted system that is used; schools are aware and will take that into consideration when acknowledging a student's GPA. "Some students will not take a hard course because they're worried about their GPA, but with that explanation if they see that you're not taking hard courses and you have a great GPA they're gonna say that this student doesn't have exposure to challenging courses," states Sekera. Theoretically, according to college admissions, the quality of a student's courses overrides a student's gpa or class rank; however every quality is still taken into consideration. McCann also stated that colleges will pay extra attention to a student's GPA at ORHS based on the school not weighting advanced courses.

Despite ORHS being a heterogeneous school, McCann also states that students continually achieve success after leaving ORHS and that "in the end, when colleges look at courses and look at your transcript they'll see that you're taking a challenging course and challenging yourself and even if you get a C in an AP course or any other high level course that may not be an AP course, if they see that you're taking a very rigorous schedule it's going to work to your advantage."

STAR THE FORCE AWAKENS WARS

"I'm told I've been a fan ever since I was a baby and went to see *The Phantom Menace* in theaters and I've never stopped loving it since," said Mitchell Harling ('16).

On December 18th, theaters around the world were filled with people of all ages eager to see the new Star Wars movie, *The Force Awakens*. This is the seventh movie in the Star Wars saga. It has been highly talked about since the trailers were released a little over a year ago. Tickets went on sale in early November and quickly sold out at most theaters, an unprecedented event for many theater chains. "I bought my ticket the first day they went on sale and spots and times were filling up rapidly," said Kobi Hackenburg ('16). As expected, *The Force Awakens* smashed the previous record for opening day ticket sales by racking up \$6.5 million. The previous record was held by the first *Hunger Games*, which was released in 2012.

The Star Wars saga is intriguing to many people and that has made it extremely popular. "Star Wars appeals to all generations because it is really made for children. And because it's made for children it reminds people of all ages of adventure and fantasy. It brings out feelings of nostalgia, which is arguably the most sought after feeling by many. That's why it appeals to almost everyone," explained Harling ('16).

The first film of the saga, *A New Hope*, was released in 1977 and quickly became a money maker. This film surpassed the 1975 film *Jaws* in revenue, which had the record at the time of \$775 million. *A New Hope* was such a hit that two more films followed within just a few years. *The Empire Strikes Back* was released in 1980 and *Return of the Jedi* in 1983, which became the most popular out of the three. "The Empire Strikes Back is my favorite, though the Jabba the Hutt sequence in *Return of the Jedi* is probably my favorite sequence of scenes in the series," said Trevor Garman, an English teacher at ORHS and an avid Star Wars fan.

For decades, references from Star Wars have been part of popular culture. The theme song is one that a lot of people know the cast of characters is recognizable. Bill Clark, a product manager for the technology company Cisco, says that the reason he loves the movies so much is that they have a "futuristic backdrop, interesting technology and great characters, but a warm-hearted, traditional good-versus-evil story line."

In addition to their entertainment value, the first three Star Wars films arguably inspired a generation of new graphic animators. Alex Lindsay, founder and CEO of Pixel Corps, is one such animator. Lindsay was part of the staff of LucasFilm, and had this to say about the job and the process: "The most impactful part of working on Star Wars was being surrounded by talented people all the time. At Lucasfilm, I worked with the most amazing artists that I had ever met. When I moved to ILM (Industrial Light and Magic), my supervisor had helped create Photoshop and many of my co-workers had invented much of what we now consider modern filmmaking tools. I learned in 3 years what would have taken 20 on my own. It really taught me a

lot about the importance of what I call a 'community of excellence.'"

The creator of Star Wars, George Lucas, is considered genius at what he does. For the first Star Wars release in 1977, Lucas wanted to include visual effects that had never before appeared in film. He created

his own animation studio, which has been used

for all of the special effects for the seven films (and for the Indiana

Jones movies as well). "Working

with George was transformative for me," Lindsay recalls. "He was

mostly quiet, almost shy. His corrections always came in the midst

of compliments on the work so far.

That said, he wasn't one for excuses.

He didn't get angry, he just stopped listening if the work wasn't done."

Each film took years to make, mostly

because animation scenes take time to create. "Working on one of these movies was

more monotonous than you would initially think," Lindsay added. "Each shot

would be 1-10 seconds long and take anywhere from a week to 9 weeks to

complete. You would work on very minor details every day, such as how

the explosion reflections rolled over the ship or how much the stars

blurred when the camera moved.

The Force Awakens is the first

Star Wars movie to be in theaters since Revenge of the Sith was released in 2005. "I have been really

looking forward to the film because it's the first continuation of

the Star Wars story from where we left off in 1983. I also just really

wanted to see what J.J. Abrams was going to do with such an iconic movie

franchise," shared Liam Conrad ('16).

Alex Ireland ('17) is an avid Star

Wars fan and has been waiting eagerly for the new Star Wars to come out.

"I can't even count how many times I've watched the movies especially leading

up to the new one. I thought The Force Awakens was one of the best movies of the

series and am looking forward to more. It was the perfect combination of the storyline from the

originals and the effects of the prequels."

"Star Wars appeals to all generations because no matter how old or sophisticated you think you are, part of you would kill for a light saber," states Hackenburg ('16).



The New Face of ORHS

By Liz Paquette



"You can drive by and point out your school now and feel proud about it. I think these changes will have a real impact on our image versus saying, 'here's my brick building; I'm proud of that brick,'" explained Mark Milliken, ORHS dean of faculty.

On November 6th, during a teacher's workshop day, a local company called AMI Graphics came in to Oyster River High School and installed a sign on the front of the school, banners on four light posts out front, a picture in the top windows of the multipurpose room and five wrap-around banners in the senior core. These changes feature a brand new logo, created just for this school.

At the beginning of the school year, the administration decided they needed to rebrand the school. Corey Parker, the athletic director, and Milliken were discussing what needed to be changed. "There was a lack of signage at our building, and a multitude of various logos. There was a lot of inconsistency and everyone was interested in change," said Milliken.

The administration contacted AMI Graphics to help create a new logo. "We just wanted to have a logo that was ours, that would be consistent, and just try to build in school pride," explained Milliken. One of ORHS's logos, a plain blue growling bobcat with no detail is actually the copyrighted logo of Peru State College in Nebraska. The other logo, the friendlier blue bobcat that is featured on the home screen of every computer was original, but it was hardly ever featured when it came to the athletics department.

On October 21st, a survey was released to the community and staff, asking them to pick their favorite logo out of four logos. Two of the logos presented were logos that the school had previously used, and the other two were brand new. "We've been working with this company, AMI Graphics, and we showed them all the various logos we had and asked them to give us some ideas," said Milliken. "We kept going back and forth, and we finally got it down to two logos for the survey."

The survey revealed that about 75% of people liked the fourth option, and so it became Oyster River's new logo. "We tried to tweak it to make it less UNH-ish, but in the end I don't see a problem with it being similar to UNH's logo, seeing as we're so close with them," said Milliken.

Sarah Levine ('18) added, "I think the new logo is really cool. I think it's good that the logo is similar to UNH's, because our school is representing the community and it feels like we're connected." Levine is very excited to represent the logo during her next sports season.

"I like the logo a lot. I'm on a sports team so it's cool that we have an aggressive mascot we can stand behind," said Emma Sourdif ('16). Susan Wilkinson, a teacher at ORHS, disagreed with this statement, saying "I



think the logo sends a negative message because it's kinda violent and aggressive. It's good to be competitive and proud but I just don't like it."

Milliken had been planning on having AMI Graphics come in during a teacher workshop day so that when all the kids came back to school on Monday, they could see all of the new surprises. "We went back and forth with ideas and worked with the budget and we ended up with the banners out front, the sign at the top of the building, the logo on the multipurpose room windows and the senior core pillar wrap-arounds," said Milliken.

"I'm glad they put up all this new stuff outside the multipurpose room and the senior core. It shows spirit," said Levine.

Matt Nixon ('18) said, "I think that in a school environment the new logo will really add extra inspiration to all the students."

All the money for the logo and these improvements to the school came from the student enrichment fund, which is money from the parking permits. This fund is used for things that the administration thinks will better the student body.

"This is phase one. Students can expect to see more in the future. Phase two will depend on money, which could come from a class gift or the parent teacher organization or something like that," explained Milliken. "Hopefully, now that people can see what can be done, it will be easier to get money for this because there are a lot more different ideas we'd like to expand on." Milliken hopes to surprise the students again on another teacher workshop day.

"I hope these changes add to the feeling that we're a community. This is a symbol of who we are and we can be proud of that," said Milliken.





Photo Credit: Brianna Rybinski



Photo Credit: Steph Schiavo



WINTER
SPORTS
IN ACTION



Photo Credit: Above: Dennis Gagnon. Below: Griffin Snow



Photo Credit: Above: Dennis Gagnon. Below: Neville Caulfield



Sacrifices for Success

By Betsy Larson



"High school hockey is very fun, but for me to further my hockey career in the way I want, the decision was essential," says Zak Lanoue ('17).

Rather than continue with the Oyster River High School hockey team during the winter season, Lanoue decided to fully commit to his club team, the Junior Monarchs.

"We have always supported Zak in his decisions about sports, as long as they are thought out and within reason. In terms of hockey, I think it was the right decision. We talked about his future goals and how they relate to the pros and cons of the Junior Monarchs program, and it was the right fit," says Mark Lanoue, Zak Lanoue's dad.

Lanoue grew up in Durham, NH, with his older sister Kathryn and younger sister Annalise. He was raised in the Oyster River community and is now, a junior at ORHS. Lanoue started playing hockey when he was five years old and has loved the sport ever since. From that point on it was a dream of his to play college hockey, and as junior year approached, Lanoue had to make a decision that would determine his future.

"My decision to play junior [Monarchs] hockey was mainly because of the exposure it gets me. My team



travels all around the country and plays some of the best teams, which exposes us to all different kinds of scouts,” says Lanoue. This exposure furthers his career and allows for more hockey recruiters to see him play. Lanoue has proven to his coaches and teammates he has what it takes. Coaches and teammates value him greatly as a player.

“Zak is a hard-working, tough-minded player and a force to be reckoned with. He is a good leader in the locker room and is respected throughout the team,” says teammate Corbin Cashman (‘17) from Exeter High School.

The team is made up of hockey players from all over NH and practices are held at the Tri-Town Ice Arena in Hooksett, NH. For some that’s not far but for Lanoue, it’s a good 45-minute trip. Tournaments and games take the athletes all over the country to play against tough competitors, such as the Northern Cyclones, Boston Bandits, Connecticut Wolfpack and more.

The Junior Monarchs work hard and challenge themselves during practices in order to be prepare themselves to play some of the most competitive teams in their division.

“Zak is the kind of kid you love to play with but hate playing against,” says Junior Monarchs teammate Kadin Mason (‘18). “He is a key part to our team and a huge leader.”

Lanoue, and the rest of his team, have dedicated significant time to hockey. With all that dedication, making it to the major leagues is only one of their goals. “There are two main goals for our team year to year. The first is to train these players at a high level, get them constant top-end competition and also get them exposure to division one colleges, prep schools and USHL teams. The second is to help them develop into contributing, responsible members of their communities,” says Junior Monarchs coach Justin Soryal.

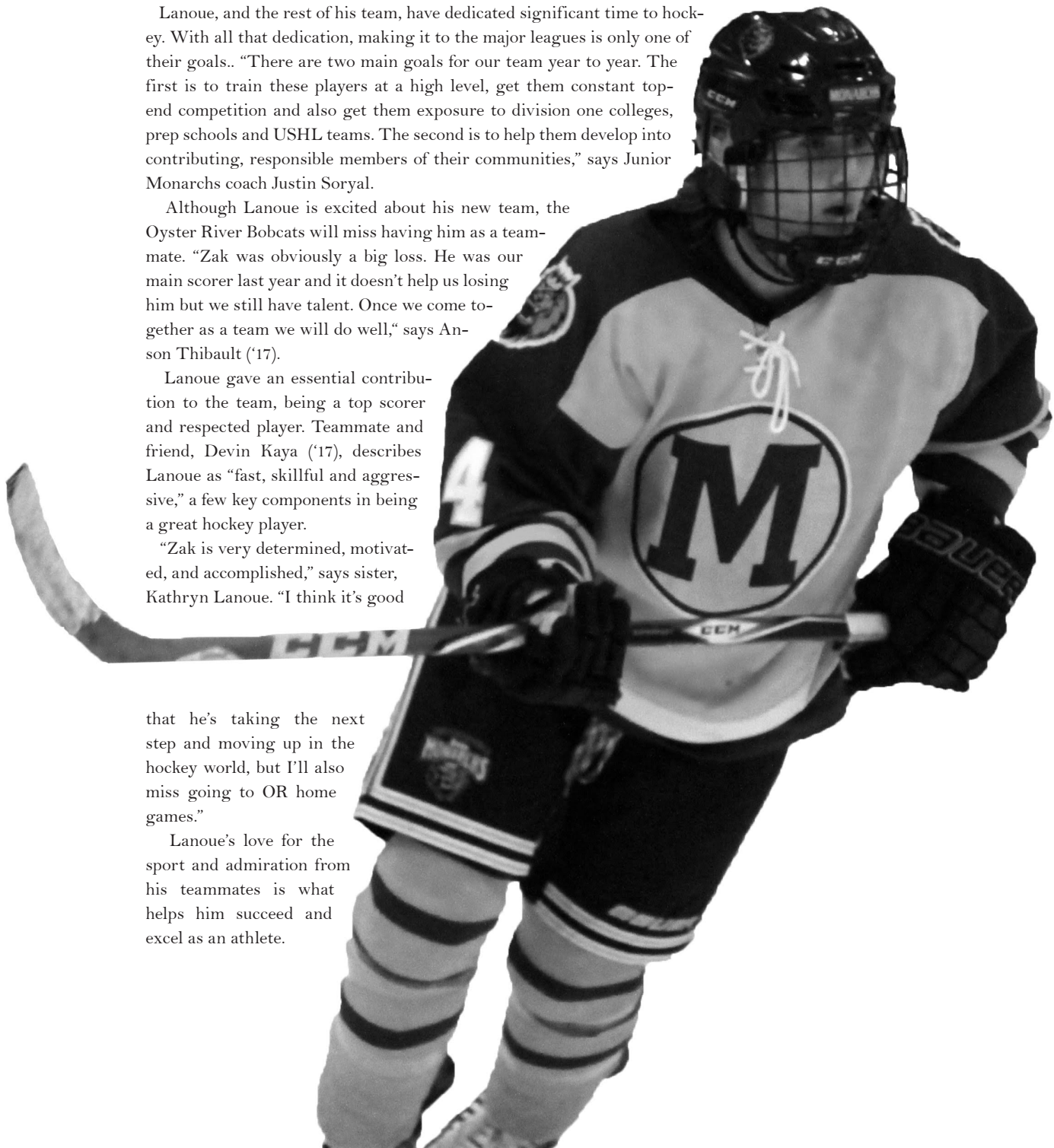
Although Lanoue is excited about his new team, the Oyster River Bobcats will miss having him as a teammate. “Zak was obviously a big loss. He was our main scorer last year and it doesn’t help us losing him but we still have talent. Once we come together as a team we will do well,” says Anson Thibault (‘17).

Lanoue gave an essential contribution to the team, being a top scorer and respected player. Teammate and friend, Devin Kaya (‘17), describes Lanoue as “fast, skillful and aggressive,” a few key components in being a great hockey player.

“Zak is very determined, motivated, and accomplished,” says sister, Kathryn Lanoue. “I think it’s good

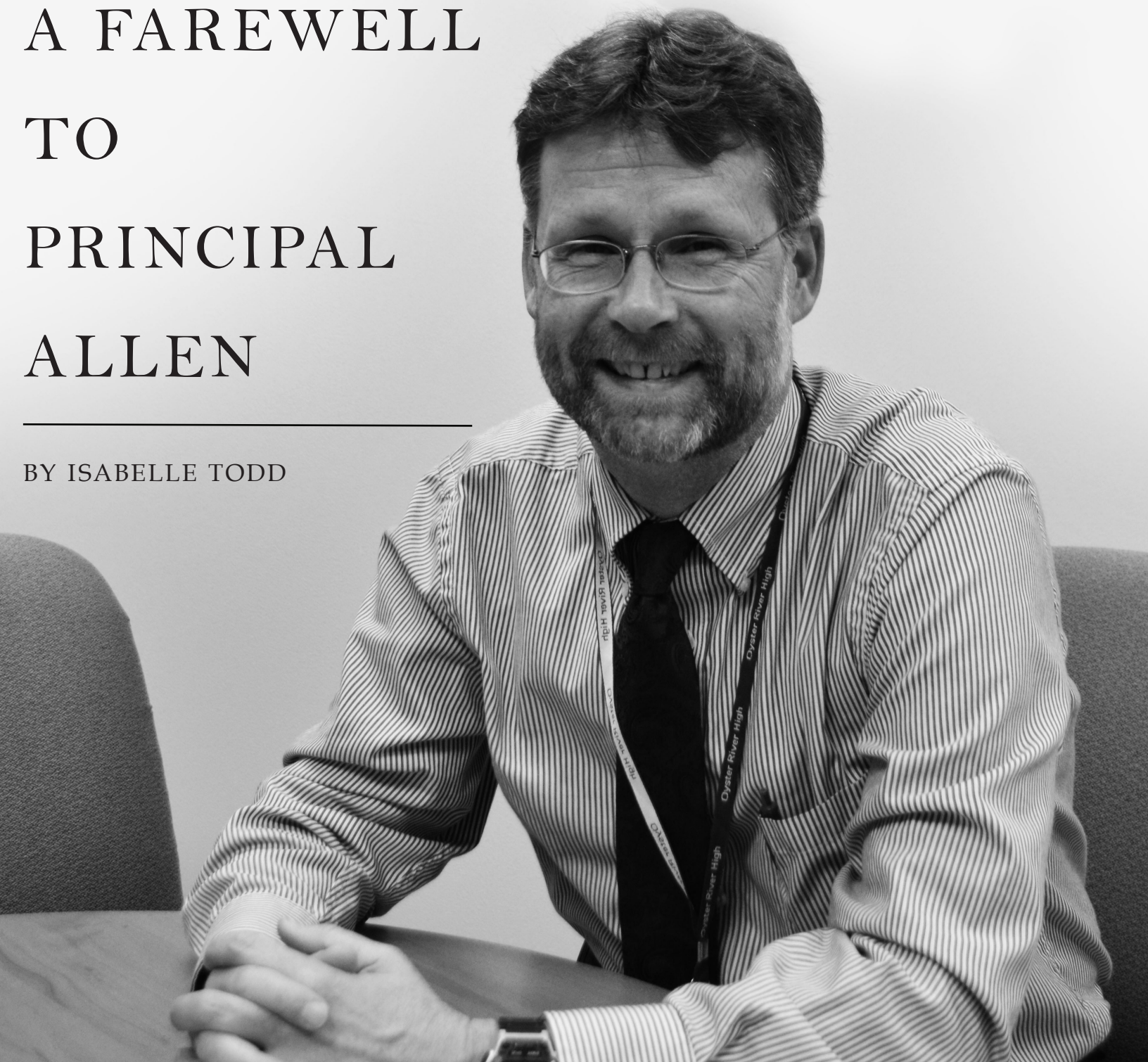
that he’s taking the next step and moving up in the hockey world, but I’ll also miss going to OR home games.”

Lanoue’s love for the sport and admiration from his teammates is what helps him succeed and excel as an athlete.



A FAREWELL TO PRINCIPAL ALLEN

BY ISABELLE TODD



“I think the student body was really proud of him for moving up to be the assistant superintendent. I knew this position was something he really wanted and a job he would take very seriously and be proud of. I think the idea of being able to serve the whole district is something that really spoke to him and being able to provide guidance for all different age levels is something he’ll be very successful at,” says, Caroline Wilson, junior class president, about Oyster River High School’s former Principal, Todd Allen. Allen has been the principal of ORHS for

the past five years and has now moved on to the position of assistant superintendent for the Oyster River School District.

Allen has served the district for 31 years now. Allen spent 23 years teaching social studies at Oyster River Middle School before he was promoted to the assistant principal position at ORMS. After three years Allen was hired as the interim principal at ORHS. Where he then moved from the interim position to hold the permanent position.

“I believe he is perceived as a very successful principal: he knows the district, he is a fine communicator, he is skilled at working with groups

to achieve real consensus, he cares deeply about the district, and he has the absolute trust and confidence of the superintendent,” says Tom Newkirk, the chair of the ORCSD school board.

Although Allen’s career timeline shows his value in education, it wasn’t always clear to him.

Allen grew up in South Paris, Maine, in Oxford County, where he attended Oxford Hills High School and continued to the University of Maine to study political science.

“I wanted to be a professional baseball player or a champion marathon runner or just rich. It really wasn’t until I got into college and really started to think about the fact that I liked social sciences. I was a political science major, and there’s not a lot you can do with a political science major. You can go to law school or teach. Those are sort of the options. I wasn’t going to become a lawyer so I said ‘what the heck, I’ll give this thing a try.’ I decided my junior year of college to become a teacher and lucked into a job at Oyster River right after I graduated,” says Allen.

Allen’s new position will entail being in charge of all curriculum development and instruction along with supervising teachers as they work to improve and refine their curriculum. Additionally, Allen will be supervising all of the principals in the district.

“He will shift to having K-12 responsibilities, particularly in the areas of curriculum and instruction. There are now numerous federal and state expectations for teaching competencies and for testing and reporting—and he will have to oversee that. In addition there are initiatives within the district that he will work on; for example, the successful implementation of all-day kindergarten, and the new K-5 math program,” explains Newkirk of Allen’s expectations in his new position.

Along with these things Allen is looking forward to the continuing responsibilities of helping better the district, except he will now move away from assisting teachers and more towards assisting administrators.

“One of the things I have always valued about my role as a principal is when I work with teachers the first thing I do is ask them ‘what can I do to help you do your job better?’ and to be able to do that for principals as well is ultimately going to be a lot of what I do,” says Allen.

It appears from Allen’s large smile as he discusses the past and future of his career that he is happy with his growth in the district over the years. But that doesn’t mean he won’t miss certain parts.

“I’ll miss going to world language night and seeing the silly performances the kids do and how much fun they have, or being at the tournament soccer games. Stuff like that where there’s just this feeling about being there that is really exciting,” says Allen.

In addition to this Allen says that he will really miss having that daily presence of students and faculty.

“It’s funny, one of the things that happens as you start to work your way up the ladder from classroom teacher to administrator, you move further and further away from the kids and for most people, myself being one of them, the reason you got involved in teaching in the first place was because you work with kids and are able to talk about things you really enjoy. The further up the chain I go the further away from the relations with the kids I

go. Even here at the high school as a principal there are so many things you have to do that aren’t about the kids, but when you’re in education as long as I have been you realize how important it is to have someone who cares enough to do a good job,” says Allen.

Although over the years Allen has inched further and further away from the classroom, it doesn’t appear that he is distant from the student body.

“Mr. Allen is very personable. He always has a smile on his face and takes the time to actually get to know students, learn their names and say good morning to everyone. He really really cares about the students of ORHS and making all of us feel as comfortable and as cared about as he can,” says Wilson.

Mike McCann, the former ORHS dean of students, will replace Allen as an interim principal. He has worked closely with Allen over the last five years and comments that Allen will “still be a part of the team, just in a different location.” McCann hopes to continue on with the progress and attitude that Allen held as principal.

“With all the support Mr. McCann has, I think he and his team will be able to lead the school successfully,” says Wilson.

Although Allen’s office space is changing, he hopes his presence in the district will not, and certainly the impact he has had on both students and staff will most definitely not be forgotten.

Linda Rief was one of the faculty that first began working with Allen 30 or so years ago. Rief has been at ORMS for the past 35 years and has been teaching English for the majority of those years. With a huge smile on her face, Rief recalls a memory where Allen got one of his student’s work about political candidates published in a huge magazine. “In that moment I thought, wow, he really is thinking about writing and reading beyond just the language arts class,” says Rief. Rief explains that working with Allen was “kind of a gift,” saying that it was “sad that he left the classroom,” as she found him to be an amazing teacher. Rief continues by saying, “I think it’s great that he has moved through the district to hold this high position. I’ve always thought that you don’t have to be moving through a district to get what someone would consider a high position and that’s what I really like about Todd. I never see him seeing himself as ‘I’m your boss’ even though he is. It’s always a collegial relationship. ‘I respect what you do in the classroom and I hope you respect what I do as an administrator, and that I’m never here to mandate you, I’m always here to talk with you and help you make this the best experience for kids.’”

Barbara Milliken, an ORHS foreign language teacher, was also one of the first teachers Allen began his career with. Milliken and Allen both started their teaching careers at ORMS. “Just over Thanksgiving my daughter pulled out of the bottom of her laundry basket a long sleeve t-shirt that she had gotten from ORMS cross country, which Allen had coached at the time, that said ‘The hills are our friends’. Underneath it said ‘Coach Allen.’” Milliken continues by saying, “We would run hills all the time at practice and he would always have the kids chanting ‘The hills are our friends, the hills are our friends!’ and I think it’s really an analogy to him and his career. He likes those hills, he likes those challenges and he always rises up to them and I really admire that.”



MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

“What stands out to me the most was Miles would come to most practices even though he was not feeling well and always had a smile.”

By Andrea Staples

“What I hope for Miles’ future is no different for every kid. I hope that they are happy and healthy and accomplish anything they want to. He has gone through so much for a young man and to see him go through and to maintain a strong attitude, it is truly inspirational,” says Brad Berube, Oyster River Middle School football coach.

Miles Goldberg is a 12-year-old student at ORMS in the 7th grade. On April 1st, 2015, what he had originally thought to be a sports injury was found to be osteosarcoma bone cancer in his leg. Goldberg endured several months of treatment, surgeries and eventual rotationplasty: a surgery that removes the tumor, amputates the knee and rotates the calf and heel 180° and attaches the calf to the thigh. This allows the rotated heel and foot to act as a knee. This type of surgery was essential to Goldberg as it allowed him to continue playing contact sports. Goldberg eventually was found to be 100% free of cancer and given a prosthetic leg. Currently, he is intent on getting his life back to normal and playing the sports he loves while being driven by his incredible positivity.

When Goldberg was diagnosed in April of 2015, he couldn’t believe it. “My initial reaction was just laughing like, ‘Are you serious?’” In his diagnosis, Goldberg had a biopsy, which showed that he had osteosarcoma, the most common type of cancer that forms in the bone, just below the knee. He started chemotherapy the following week, which didn’t initially work; the tumor grew. “After some time, I thought ‘it’s not going to be that bad’ because everyone gets through it eventually, especially at a young age.”

Goldberg’s immensely positive attitude helped his friends and family stay positive too, although it wasn’t always easy for him or his family.

Matt Goldberg, the father of Miles stated that when he initially found out about Goldberg’s diagnosis “all external sound went away. [There was only] internal heaviness. I was able to engage emergency planning mode until I got off the phone. Then I melted into foggiest, vitally worried, considering the worst possible loss. I cried.”

Although the news was difficult emotionally for family and friends, Brendan Deptula (‘21) says that he was “scared at first but then his [Miles’] positive attitude made me feel so much better.”

Goldberg as well as his family and friends were ready to fight.

According to Goldberg’s father, their plan from the start was to “meet with the best team, and attack. Miles was calm and committed from the start. There was no question how to get things started, i.e., the chemo.” However, the largest problem having to be faced by the Goldbergs was what had to be done to Miles’ leg. “All surgical options would leave our son with a modified leg—that it was a foregone conclusion—a significant portion of his leg must go. His life has changed forever,” stated Goldberg’s father. There was no doubt that Miles needed surgery, but he did have a choice.

Goldberg had three options for his surgery, which would occur ten weeks after his original diagnosis: limb salvage, bone transplant or rotationplasty.

The main outcome Goldberg had wished for from the surgery he was going to receive was to be able to play contact sports again. If Goldberg was to get limb salvage, a rod would be placed in his leg and he would not be able to play contact sports. If he was to get a bone transplant, again, he would not be able to play contact sports. However, there was one option that did allow him to play football and hockey again: rotationplasty.

“[Rotationplasty is] unique because they take out my knee but they take my lower leg and turn it around and connect it to my thigh and this is where the knee used to be is now my heel and my foot and it’s like a knee; I can bend it just the same,” says Goldberg. He had his surgery in June 2015, and despite few complications the rotationplasty surgery was successfully completed.

Shortly before surgery in June, Goldberg found out that he still had one more battle to fight; the cancer had spread to his lungs. “I started a new chemo regimen and it was just two different types of drugs and then I had both lung surgeries. Now from what they’ve seen it [cancer] is 100% gone and then I’ve really just been able to relax and everything’s been easy for me.”

Five months after Goldberg’s rotationplasty, on November 3rd 2015, he received his prosthetic leg. Goldberg has been very positive throughout the experience. “Most kids who have cancer end up turning out great in the future. I just kept that in mind.”

Once Goldberg received his prosthetic leg, he was cleared to play

contact sports again, and he couldn't have been more thrilled. Goldberg has played football and hockey for several years and loves both sports. He was originally inspired to play football by watching professional athletes play. ORHS lacks a football team, but that doesn't stop Goldberg from playing. He is debating on going to Dover High School for their football program.

Unfortunately, Goldberg was unable to play for ORMS football this past season. "I miss being able to play in general and the rush of adrenaline when you make a tackle or score a touchdown. Watching the players have fun makes me miss the feeling of the pads on my body and the feeling of the turf under my feet." However he did help coach the team and said that "It was definitely different from playing. Having power is nice and being able to see it from another perspective is very interesting."

While Goldberg was coaching, it was evident to players on the ORMS football team that there was something missing. "You didn't really think you would notice that he was gone but you definitely could. In practice he always brought a good attitude that made everyone else a better player. This year he was a big loss. But, he was an inspiration to us. If we were losing we would just say that we would score for Miles," says Owen Mckiernan ('21), teammate of Goldberg.

Goldberg's positivity was increasingly said to have really helped his friends and family; it seemed as though nothing would defeat him.

Adam Stewart ('21), teammate of Goldberg said his strengths included: "his positive attitude and great sense of humor, for sure, because he has always been [like this] for as long as I have known him, and he really just cheers everyone up because he is just an awesome guy."

Stewart also stated that Goldberg "could play anywhere, and really was a team leader." Goldberg showed a strong mentality, along with the support of strong friends and family. Mckiernan further noted that "throughout the whole thing he [Goldberg] always had a smile on his face and seemed to be the guy who said that the glass would be half full rather than half empty."

Even though Goldberg's positivity carried his friends and family throughout the experience, learning of the news was always difficult.

"My initial reaction to Miles's diagnoses was, 'Oh no, we lost one of our best football players.' Not only was it that we had lost him for a year in football, but that it would change his life and all of his friends at school and out of school. When I learned that Miles was getting a prosthetic, though, I felt relieved that Miles was going to be able to get back out onto the field for our last season at Oyster River," said Hayden Marshall ('21).

Goldberg strived with the support of many friends and family; Marshall, who had been friends with Goldberg since preschool, had shaved his head for Miles to show support.

Although Goldberg was unable to play for the 2015 football season, his presence was strong. Berube, recalls "One night we were doing a drill and I was using shields (pads) and hitting the kids making them pay attention and stay low. Miles asked if he could help and he grabbed a shield (pad) and stood at the end of the drill doing what I was doing. What stands out to me the most was Miles would come to most practices even though he was not feeling well, and always had a smile."

The ORMS football season was a clear success, as Berube further

noted that "when we came in second place we had Miles go up and get the trophy and his teammates were chanting MVP [Most Valuable Player]. What was nice to see was a few of the players on the other team also started to chant MVP."

Friends and family of Goldberg were all amazed by his positivity and drive, often learning something themselves from the experience. "He has become wiser. We recognize the many silver linings of this process; one being the foray into more mature conversations about life and sacrifice and adaptation and survival," says Goldberg's father. It is evident that Goldberg is well beyond his years, and has grown throughout the experience.

When asked how Goldberg powered through his obstacles this past year, he says, "I don't need a method to stay positive. I'm a very positive person." In November 2015, he had began strengthening his leg to prepare for the 2015-2016 hockey season that he will be able to play in stating: "I know that I'm going to be back to everything in like two months from now [January 2016] everything will be back to normal for me; it'll be so easy for me to walk by then and I'll be back playing sports easily, I'll have hair, which is probably going to be one of the better things, and everything should feel normal."

As of December 7th, 2015, Goldberg was said to be officially cured. "Above all, Miles' family, friends and community are strong and positive and hopeful because of the way he takes this on. He is both logical and emotional. He processes issues efficiently. His demeanor and commitment leave everyone else no choice but to mobilize, smile and work. I have never been so proud," says Goldberg's father.

For more information on Goldberg's story, visit <http://miles-goldberg2015.blogspot.com/> which is a blog dedicated to his journey.



Goldberg throwing football in December 2015.

COMFORT, CONFIDENCE, AND CONSEQUENCE

“First and foremost, what people wear should never impact who we call our friends and who we want to talk to, nor anything past a brief initial reaction to what someone might be interested in based on their wardrobe,” said Laurel Gordon (‘19).

Every day, we all ask the same question: What should I wear today? Aside from matching and being comfy or classy, there’s a lot more to style than meets the eye. Also, if you’re feeling down about the cold temperatures up here in the arctic north, and you feel as though your wardrobe might be lacking its usual (or not usual) flare, then you’ve come to the right place.

Many people have the mindset that what you wear does not matter. There is concrete logic behind this statement, but it is also a flawed notion. In a world of first impressions, what people first see can be critical to landing a job, or just standing out from the crowd.

The most important thing is that what we wear should not dictate how we see ourselves and other people. This can be the quick, all-inclusive conclusion about clothing for some people, but the meaning is deeper than what’s on the surface. “Fashion is my favorite way of expressing myself. Clothing is something that impacts every single person, every day. It can change our moods and shape our lifestyles,” said Annah Todd, Digital Brand Manager of Anjé Clothing and Oyster River alumna. She is right; a study conducted by Joe Pinsker for *The Atlantic* in 2015 proves that if you’re dressed to impress, you are much more likely to get work done than if you were wearing a sweatsuit. It is very tempting to be lazy in a lazy outfit.

Aside from self-expression, the reason for wearing a favorite outfit can be much simpler than many would think. “I really enjoy wearing clothes that make me feel good,” said Sara Messler (‘16), who is always dressed in a colorful and well-coordinated outfit. “Confidence is a huge part of feeling good in anything you wear,” she continued. Wearing an outfit that makes you smile when you put it on is always a good choice.

Some may be happy in an all fleece getup, but it’s unlikely that it will catch anyone’s attention. When

you put in some effort, you are much more likely to get a few compliments that will do wonders on your self-confidence, as well as make you feel good whenever you put on that outfit for months to come. On the contrary, no one says that you need anyone else’s approval to be confident in what you wear, so dress nicely for you. You don’t need anyone’s permission to look great.

“In the everyday world, I think the role of clothing is to be an extension of your personality,” said Jack Callahan, informed observer. Aside from talents, interests, quirks and your sense of humor, what you wear is a great way to show people a little bit about yourself without having to exchange a word. It’s all about expressing yourself. Your clothes are almost like a bio that travels with you, something that strangers can see to get an idea of what you’re like and what your interests might be. In this sense, the bio is left up to you the writer, wearer and subject to create.

If you’re feeling inspired to look your best after reading this, I have a few suggestions for the upcoming winter season that will keep you feeling warm and looking great. Sweaters from your dad’s closet with different patterns and designs are making a comeback, and look great with jeans. Some of Messler’s favorites include vests, skirts, tights and warm ponchos. Cam Casella (‘17) recommends “dark jeans with some sort of leather boots, and a button-up shirt with a jacket.”

Todd had some strong propositions as well. “We’re in New England so we need functional clothing that can endure the elements. I highly recommend Patagonia, as they have an amazing return policy and truly stand by their clothing. Wool is one of the warmest materials you can wear, so instead of putting on a thin cotton flannel, opt for a grey wool sweater. Minimalism is best.”

From self-confidence to making a statement, whatever we choose to put on in the morning can have a much larger impact on our lives than we may think. Casella suggests that everyone should “just dress naturally.” He continued, saying, “Don’t force anything you don’t actually like to wear for the respect of somebody else, just be you and you will probably develop your own individual style.”

By Neville Caulfield



Models: Maegan Doody and Isabella Saputo



Photo Credit: Caitlin Coxen

Capping Off the Year

By Katie Schmitt

The first stepping stone in life is your first tooth, soon then follows your first words, first steps and first days of kindergarten. Before you, or your parents know it, it's time to begin high school: the daunting "beginning" to your future. For the majority, high school consists of four years, but for others, they have different incentives and ideas.

Graduating early could be chosen for various reasonings: excelling in classes, gap years or in some circumstances, high school just is not the compatible way to carry out your future. For some students, high school is not enough exposure to real-life circumstances, and students are ready to involve themselves in the real world.

"The desire was to get a head start on my professional career. I knew I

Early graduation is not for everyone, although if it's being considered, I guess the most prominent question is asking yourself what you see yourself gaining from such an experience.

"If somebody is planning on graduating early, my biggest question is 'what do you hope to gain from that, what are the advantages,'" says Sekera.

Some of the benefits include exposure to the realistic lifestyles, learning self-sufficiency, saving money by not paying for additional years of schooling and independence. And with most controversial topics, there are cons associated with the circumstance. Most of the time, graduating early is done so that an alternative plan can be executed. Those alternative plans

"I view my entire future as climbing a series of ladders and seeking platforms to put myself on, and I wanted to begin climbing the ladder as soon as possible." -Sam Colby

had opportunities available to me outside of school, and I knew more opportunities were waiting to be seized," says Sam Colby, early graduate of Oyster River High School class of 2015. "I view my entire future as climbing a series of ladders and seeking platforms to put myself on, and I wanted to begin climbing the ladder as soon as possible." Colby began working in association with a company known as "Jiberish" once he graduated early his senior year of high school and realized he wanted to become more invested in that lifestyle, a lifestyle in which four more years of schooling post high school wouldn't necessarily be essential. Colby is now pursuing his professional career in film and photography.

Many people feel compelled to graduate high school, and then proceed straight to some type of education in order to be qualified for the real world. Yet there have been many people that are able to advocate for themselves without spending copious amounts of money on a college education while still being self-sufficient and invested in the "real world."

"Most students are excited about the next step after high school," says Kim Sekera, counselor at Oyster River High School. "Students want to get their life started as soon as possible."

range anywhere from internships, volunteer work and even gap years spent traveling.

"I cannot say that I was fully prepared for the cost and responsibility of living on my own, but I knew that going into it, and I was ready to figure out how to live on my own. I had traveled alone a lot for work and saw myself as a fairly self-sufficient person, but I had no prior experience paying my own rent and living under a roof that wasn't my parents'," says Colby. Colby's parents had to take time to contemplate the decision. Everyone nowadays is so used to students taking the traditional path of education, going to college, getting a job and contributing back to society.

"I do recall feeling some trepidation. As a parent, you wonder how your son or daughter plans to move forward when doing something that goes against the grain, and you wonder why they want to head down that path," says Andy Colby, Sam's dad. "That said, we wanted to listen to his reasons, hear his plan and talk about it among ourselves (his mother and me). We needed time to mull it over, think about the implications on his future and try to understand his motivation."

There are alternatives that coincide with early graduation, other than

taking an internship or becoming invested in a job right out of high school. Jake Garner ('16), member of the Mouth of the River Staff, will be graduating early to pursue his education outside of the walls of Oyster River High School. Garner plans to depart in February of 2016 to travel to New Zealand through NOLS, National Outdoor Leadership School. This program provides students with an experience in which they will become more self-sustainable, group-oriented and learn the importance of group dynamics. Garner chose to graduate a semester early in order to focus on traveling and experiences before attending college fall of 2016.

"We do typically have a few students who decide to graduate early each year. Not sure if it would be considered a growing trend. It does seem that there are more since I first started ORHS nine years ago, but it has fluctuated the past few years from three to four students," says Sekera.

Gap years are some of the "untraditional" ways to obtain an educational experience. For some students, they prefer this, instead of spending another semester being invested in classes that may not even end up being applicable or relevant to what they choose to pursue as a career.

There are various programs that are advertised, all with the same incentive: to provide students with the capability to travel, volunteer and be educated as they contribute to the world. These programs are most often referred to as gap-year programs.

ORHS has implemented the "21st century learning style" into the mission statement for the school. The learning style is based on enhancing the learning experience for students through innovation skills, communication, critical thinking and group collaboration, all of which gap years promote for each of their trips. It can be arguably said that both the high school and gap-year programs encourage the same mission statements for the experience of their students.

Many colleges offer gap-year and educational experiences abroad, so students are able to expand their "horizons," enhance their experiences and become more compatible with the aspect of being independent. That being said, if students take a gap-year or service program prior to college application or college attendance, they will have already experienced these aspects. Colleges encourage gap-year programs so that experiences encountered while involved into such a program can be applied to their education. If students choose to experience these trips before college, they

can be significantly more prepared for their schooling experience.

"Our program leaders come with backgrounds in teaching, experiential education, psychology, wilderness training, river rafting, international development and other outdoor and educational fields," says Erik Schoon, coordinator of gap programs for Rustic Pathways, a group whose mission statement is to enhance learning for students, while integrating them into real-world circumstances. "Each year, we hold in-country training sessions for both new and returning staff, to uphold our standards in safety, student learning, community service and the overall student experience," says Schoon.

Each program has similar incentives, to offer students an experience that can enhance the way they look at life, the way they educate themselves, and their potential.

Colin Hall, attendee of a Rustic Program in the summer of 2015 says, "Overall, the only way I can sum up my experience with Rustic is amazing. The people, the culture, the public service and the fun all came together to provide me with an experience that I will never forget." The program offered everything from surfing, volunteer work, snorkeling to becoming immersed into the local Costa Rican culture. "Working with the people of Costa Rica really showed me how lucky I am, and it also showed me how fulfilling it is to help others. Being a part of something bigger than myself really showed how much can be done when people come together to help out," said Hall.

Students who choose to graduate early have an incentive to do so. This is not an encouragement to go out and decide that high school may not "fit your fancy." Students that have graduated early have invested themselves in programs such as internships, gap programs, circumstances in which skills that have been acquired over the years are applied to help themselves, and in most cases, others as well.

Colby says, "Everyone who goes to college has to figure out how to live on their own, but I think my situation was a little different. Living in the city, not going to school and paying my own rent really challenged my self-discipline at first, but it was the best exercise in self-motivation that I've ever put myself through, and I think I grew immensely as an individual because of it."



Photo Credit: Sam Colby, taken while working at Jiberish.

Save It for Later



For many, high school is the time when young adults form their first meaningful relationships and find their first loves. Here, in the small gossiping bubble of Oyster River High School, it's pretty obvious to tell who's with who.

There are usually a few easy ways to know who's in a relationship. Sometimes it's through gossip, but primarily it's through public display of affection or PDA.

There is wide range of PDA shown here at Oyster River. There are little things that most couples do, which for the most part are deemed acceptable in a school environment. These things include: holding hands, an arm around one another, a quick hug, or a quick kiss on the cheek.

These actions don't typically seem to disturb fellow classmates or distract students from their academics. However, every once in a while, you will stumble upon a couple who seems to be playing a game of tongue of war, or having a nice groping session. Don't lie to yourself! You've all seen it, and the bottom line is it's not cute. No one ever looks at a couple in the hallway partaking in vulgar PDA and sends them heart-warming romantic looks. In fact, people avoid it like the plague.

"I see it every day. It doesn't matter what time of day; I see it all day long," says economics teacher, Heather Healy. "It really depends on the level of affection. If eyes are shut and it's full on makeout, that's gross. If it's just sitting together and legs resting across one another, that doesn't really bother me," adds Healy.

Senior Courtney Elmslie agrees with Healy. "I see all forms of PDA every day. In the hallway, at lunch as well as in between classes when couples are trying to get their final embrace before they go their separate ways for

50 minutes. Sometime they're even waiting outside their class," Elmslie laughed. "If you really need to say goodbye for 50 minutes, I suggest you re-evaluate your relationship," Elmslie concluded.

Todd Allen and Mark Milliken, the school principal and vice principal, are also aware of the amount of PDA. "On a daily basis there are couples that I will ask to please stop, hoping that it will send a message the first time around," said Allen.

"When it starts to make people feel uncomfortable is when it becomes a problem," added Milliken.

When asking freshmen Aydin Kaya and Jared Benoit whether or not PDA makes them feel uncomfortable they were quick to respond. "It's just annoying," exclaimed Kaya.

"Just save it for after school," Benoit chimed in.

Although PDA is pretty prominent here at Oyster River, it's apparently much worse at schools in the surrounding area. Nick Avery-Leaf ('16) spent his junior year at Exeter High School and explained, "The PDA there was absurd. I saw everything you can do with your clothes on. That's all I'm going to say," said Avery-Leaf.

Senior Christian Burt who currently is involved in a relationship gives his advice to those who partake in vulgar PDA: "I think small stuff like holding hands is ok, but PDA makes everyone uncomfortable. It doesn't matter who you are, just don't do it in school," said Burt.

Elmslie strongly agrees and makes a fantastic point. "First of all, you're in school to learn. Once school is over there is still a whole half of the day left, plus the weekend, so save it till then. I think you'll survive," said Elmslie.

FIVE THINGS TO DO IF YOU SEE PDA:

1 RUN AWAY AS FAST AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN - If you're the shy type and are too afraid and/or uncomfortable to say something (which is completely normal, because PDA is super uncomfortable) then leave the premises A-S-A-P!

3 CLEAR YOUR THROAT LOUDLY AND NOTICEABLY - Give the couple a nice and loud, "Ahemmm!" Once they untie tongues and look at you, give 'em the stink eye. This will clearly send the message that they should stop forever.

5 GRAB THE NEAREST FIRE EXTINGUISHER - Pull the pin, aim, then sweep left to right. This is a bold move but a good one! (P.S. This may lead to expulsion.)

2 BE BLUNT AND ASK THEM TO PLEASE STOP - Calling the couple out will make them uncomfortable and will hopefully make them think twice before deciding to get all lovey-dovey in front of an audience. It will also prove a point that it makes a lot of people uncomfortable.

4 MAKE DRY-HEAVING NOISES - If you make sounds around the couple like you're about to blow chunks, it will most likely get their attention and hopefully send the message that their actions are nauseating.

6 JOIN THEM! - Enough said.

- Jake Garner



WHAT Did You Say?!

By Liz Paquette

“It’s like walking through a minefield with ‘what terms can I use? What terms can’t I use?’” explained Colleen Heath (‘18).

Before the annual fall play, flyers were plastered throughout every hallway and bathroom in the high school to promote *Twelve Angry Jurors*. On one of the posters, someone pointed to the title and scribbled, “Why so PC (politically correct)?” because of the title change.

Political correctness can be really helpful in some cases, but it can also go too far. There are points when conversation becomes so politically correct that we just censor ourselves. Are we really going to change the names of American classics like *Twelve Angry Men* to prove a point? While the actual storyline stayed the same, was it necessary for the title and pronouns in the story need to be changed? The short answer is no. But in order to understand this issue, we must first define it.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, political cor-

rectness is “the avoidance of forms of expression or action that are perceived to exclude, marginalize, or insult groups of people who are socially disadvantaged or discriminated against.”

“I think political correctness is a result of the cultural changes in the 1960’s and 70’s,” said political science major at University of New Hampshire, Chandler Hull. One of the theories is that an important cause of political correctness is cultural Marxism. Marxists believe that culture has a subconscious influence on people, which creates inequalities between races, genders, sexual orientations, religion, and culture.

Cultural Marxists try to remove these inequalities through the words and images that we use. Political correctness is this type of censorship, where all views on equality that disagree with the cultural Marxist view are avoided, censored, and punished. The issue of political correctness is complicated. To put it simply, you should treat people with respect. But unfortunately people try to censor the way we think and talk, and

that's when it goes too far.

Megan Hutar ('18) said, "Political correctness is not censorship because for me, it's about respecting people's beliefs and who they are." If you respect someone, you'll refer to them how they want to be referred, and simultaneously be politically correct.

"I feel like political correctness is a personal thing," said Nina Messer ('16). "If you want to be politically correct, that's fine, but it's just how you are supposed to act, not how others should act."

Heath agrees with this, saying, "You shouldn't have to figure out what someone identifies as or what their religion is; it's good to ask those questions but it shouldn't be required of everyone as long as you're okay if someone corrects you. If they do, you should use the right pronoun but they shouldn't be mad at you for messing up once. As long as you put in the effort then I don't think it matters."

Political correctness crosses the line when it tries to suggest an insult or slight on the part of the person who's using a specific term, even if no harm was intended. "It's not like anyone is going out of their way to offend people by saying Merry Christmas. I feel like there's a lot of sensitivity that does not need to be there," said Messer, who works at a local coffee shop and is used to wishing customers, 'Happy Holidays.' "It's always safe to say 'have a nice holiday,' but I don't understand why people would get offended by 'Merry Christmas.' I don't think it's inappropriate."

This also begs the question: Why are people offended by "Merry Christmas" or "Christmas tree"? It's almost like when someone says "I'll pray for you." They're sending you their best wishes in the most meaningful way they can. And although you might not celebrate the same holiday as someone else, their "Merry Christmas" holds the same feelings and joy that's behind others' "Happy Hanukkah" or "Happy Kwanzaa," etc., so why is it wrong?

Liev Manck ('19) was raised Jewish but is now an atheist. "I'm personally not offended by [people] saying Merry Christmas, even if I did celebrate it; but I can understand because there are a lot of people who think others should keep their minds open to things, and if you're just doing the generalization of something, it pisses other people off."

The play *Twelve Angry Men* was written in 1954 by Reginald Rose and is a classic story, describing how twelve jurors were forced to consider a homicide trial. When the drama club was deciding on what play to choose, they were between "Twelve Angry Men" and "Twelve Angry Women." Colleen Heath ('18) worked backstage for the drama club, and she explained that "we just wanted to be able to have people of both genders in the production so we combined the two plays, and that's where the name 'Twelve Angry Jurors' came from."

Manck was a lead actor in the play, and said, "I think the play title was totally fine. I'm a sucker for the old movie, but if they're gonna put girls in the play they should change it to *Twelve Angry Jurors*." I understand why the play title was changed, but these kids are actors. They're supposed to play a part, and the women could have played the part of men and left the story the same. But this isn't a huge deal.

Messer concluded that "when it comes to situations like [the play title], no one's really being offended by it being called *Twelve Angry Jurors*. It's just the title of a play and it should not matter because the play was entertaining nonetheless." The change was unnecessary but so minor that it didn't detract from the quality of the play.

Mandeville added that, "I think the play title could've gone either way. I think if the name really offended someone they would speak out, but I don't think the title matters. I think political correctness is usually a bad thing, because not everything always has to be politically correct." There are a lot of things that just simply didn't need to be changed. There is no reason to call a Christmas tree a holiday tree.

Heath concluded that "I think, to a limit, PC is good, but when everything you say has to be politically correct it can lead to almost censorship." Political correctness is preventing our use of the first amendment. We're censoring ourselves, and political correctness is a way to divide us into groups. It's damaging because someone or some group can turn any term into a way to pass judgment on other people. Anything past politeness goes too far. If you just act like a nice person, and treat people with respect, then you'll have just the right amount of political correctness.

Filtered Support



On November 15th, you logged onto Facebook and saw your news feed dressed in the blue, white, and red of the French flag to show awareness and support for the people affected by the ISIS terrorist attacks in Paris. At first sight, this appeared to be a fair way to show unity. We see Americans banding with another nation to try to counteract this outrage against humanity. With an objective eye, the intentions seemed to be only good, but let me play devil's advocate. These ways to show support through social media are created to spread awareness, or support a cause, but as popularity grows we can lose the meaning behind these causes as they become merely trends.

Sadly, the Paris attacks are one of many tragic events in recent years. Not only have there been acts of terror and war, but tragic circumstances of disease and poverty affect millions every year. The question that arises is why are some outcries heard over others? There seems to be a pattern of people's growing awareness of certain global issues through trends in social media. We see marketing tactics used to create a following toward a cause, whether it be the "Ice Bucket Challenge" to raise awareness/money and for ALS research,

"no-shave November" to raise awareness about prostate cancer, or changing the filter on profile pictures to show support for tragedies. These trends develop a massive following. Our support of these causes through "challenges" and "tags" over social media aren't really helping to solve any issue, and becomes just a fad.

As someone who chose to change her profile to the French flag filter, Oyster River student Arabella Reece ('16) explains her initial reaction to the option, stating, "I saw that

a bunch of my family and friends had changed their pictures, and I thought it would be a good way to show support, so I did too." This is a way to acknowledge a tragedy occurred, but there is

I think sometimes when people participate in these trends it makes them feel like they have contributed or helped when they really haven't."

-Sophie Merritt

an aspect of conformity that comes along with participating in these kinds of trends, considering oftentimes our choice is triggered by seeing our friends participate vs. the issue itself.

Krystal D'Costa, a writer for Scientific American, explains her findings on the aspect of peer pressure on social media. She states, "There is a difference between norms that arise as a result of social consideration and norms that are driven by social momentum." To synthesize her point, she argues that

the motive of these social media trends plays a massive factor as to how useful they are. If a grassroots campaign is started to help a certain cause, and is successful because a group is motivated to help raise money/awareness, its productivity is much higher than a trend that is publicized by people who may not be as educated about the cause. Whether people are conforming to these social media trends, Reece argues that trends like the French facebook filter can be beneficial, stating, “it definitely draws attention to the issue and might even inform people about what happened.”

The concept of marketing a cause or an issue through social media, whether it be challenges, tags, or filters, is an interesting and relatively new way that these issues, organizations, or movements have succeeded in recruiting a following. In a recent Wired article about Facebook’s profile picture filter initiative, writer Molly McHugh explains her findings. “In the first 24 hours after [the filter] was introduced, the site saw a 3,000-fold spike in normal daily traffic, going from 30 people a day to over 100,000 people.” Facebook is benefiting by the increase in user traffic to their site, but I don’t see how the people of France are.

These trends can bring attention to an unfortunate situation, and to many they are easily assessable. Sophie Merritt (‘16) is an Oyster River student who chooses to rarely engage in posting on social media, and shares her opinion, stating, “I think the fact that Facebook made it so simple to apply the filter played a big part in the number of people who actually participated. I think sometimes when people participate in these trends it makes them feel like they have contributed or helped when they really haven’t.” This feeling of contribution may be fulfilling for those participating in these trends, but Merritt poses a drawback to this, explaining, “I believe if people participate in these challenges or apply some filter they are less likely to actually contribute, because they feel like they’ve already done their part.”

Oyster River alumni and class of 2014 President Andrew McDonald expands. “I think the use of these profile pictures as ‘cut and paste solidarity’ is pretty ingenuine. The primary objective is to inflate the egos of the people who participate. Aside from showing solidarity with other white people, the Facebook filters do absolutely nothing to help the families of victims, or to solve any of the complex problems that lead to the Paris attacks.” It can be hard to imagine how else we can contribute to such a complex situation, but allowing conversation among people from around the world is the first step to reaching a universal understanding and a possible solution. Social media is an incredible platform to do so, but the simplicity and genericness of these particular trends can cut that conversation short.

Shauna Horsley, the Mass Media teacher at ORHS has a similar concern. She states, “I definitely see the good intentions in showing symbolic support through the Facebook filters, or the ‘Ice Bucket Challenge,’ for example, although, I do wonder if these sorts of trends diminish people’s efforts to help in a cause. Because these trends are so simple and automatic, someone can check off their list that they’ve contributed, when in reality they could potentially do a lot more.”

Steph Schiavo (‘16), ORHS student council member actively

chose not to change her profile picture filter. Along with Horsley, she explains an aspect of these trends that is often overlooked. Schiavo explains, “I think the trend has positive intentions, but it overshadows and minimizes other recent tragedies that don’t get the same media coverage. There was a bombing in Beirut days before the Paris tragedy and it got zero media coverage. I think we prioritize certain things over others.” This is crucial in understanding the message we are actually sending out when we selectively prioritize certain issues over others.

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“*The use of these profile pictures as ‘cut and paste solidarity’ is pretty ingenuine. The primary objective is to inflate the egos of the people who participate.*”

-Andrew McDonald

tion, not only are we creating a hierarchy of what things are most important to publicize, but the act of participating in these challenges, like the “ALS Ice Bucket Challenge,” can cause us to overlook the actual purpose of the trend. Schiavo explains, “I think that people sometimes get invested in causes because they’re trendy, but then the interest passes. The “Ice Bucket Challenge” is a good example of that. It was a really big thing at the time, but I honestly can’t even remember what disease it raised money for.”

McDonald explains why he believes so many took part in the challenge, stating, “If people identify us by the things we like and share on Facebook, then sharing one of these ‘good deed post’ makes a lot of sense. I think these sort of posts represent very real sympathy or good intention, but as to whether they actually address the problem that they identify, I’m not convinced.”

Schiavo articulates how in the scheme of things, there needs to be actual movements to solve problems, explaining, “When tragedies happen or diseases plague a large number of people, then the activism needs to go further than just social media trends. It’s nice and all to put a French flag filter over your profile picture, but it’s more important to actually physically do something to work toward making sure this type of thing doesn’t happen again.”

If these trends are the extent to what we do for certain causes, we are perpetuating that we don’t really have the ability to do something more significant. For those who have limited access to donate, or spread awareness their own individual way, trends may be an option for them to show their support. Although, for many, there are more beneficial things to be done to make a difference.

- Jessie Stelter

I got a license to drive

As you walk around the student parking lot, I'm sure you notice some cars that would be better suited outside of a luxury hotel than a high school. Why does a teenager need a \$50,000 car with a megatron V9 turbo engine? Simply put, they don't.

"High school students only need a car that goes from point A to B; anything more is excessive," said Patrick O'Brien ('16), the proud owner of a used 2001 Volvo. A car should be praised for its functionality, not its price tag. A car that moves people safely from one location to another without self destructing and an AUX cord to play some nasty beats is really all a high schooler needs. "When I was in high school everyone rode the bus...a few kids had cars, but there weren't parking lots designated for [students]... [the cars] were a good 10 to 15 years old, beaters I think we called them," said social studies teacher Karen VanDyke.

Nowadays teenagers expect a car when they turn 16 and get their license. The lucky ones do, though usually it's an older car with a lot of mileage that Vin Diesel wouldn't be caught dead driving. Having a less than stellar car is a right of passage that most adults would happily complain about if they were given the chance. They'll also most likely mention that their first car was a piece of trash.

Cars are necessary for kids who have jobs, and social lives. "I think it's good for kids to have cars. It allows them to have a little more freedom," said Hunter Rief ('16), the proud owner of an Audi RS6.

The problem arises when parents throw down a small fortune on their child's first car. I'm sure a lot of us dream of whipping around in a sparkling BMW, but if this vehicle is just handed to us then it creates a sense of entitlement. Teens who are handed luxury cars at age 16 will be left with a sense of entitlement for all of their lives and will not have the mindset that they need to work for things.

"When you're talking about the amount of money and payments [associated with a car] then you lose sight of what life is really about. You set yourself up in a position where you're working to maintain a certain status and it just makes you miserable," said Van Dyke.





When you start off with a luxury car then you don't appreciate it in the same way because you didn't work for it. Meanwhile if you've put in the hard work and time to purchase your vehicle, instead of having your parents hand it you, you'll know that you deserve the status that is associated with the car.

"As a general rule, things you don't earn yourself you're less careful with," said VanDyke.

Most kids put little to no effort to get these cars that some adults can only dream of driving. So if their current car is totaled because they were being reckless with it, there may be an expectation that their parents will buy them a new one.

Giving a kid a luxury car with the capacity to go well over the maximum speed limit is enabling speeding. A teenager will never need a car that maxes out at 155 mph, as there is no place for a teenager to legally drive that fast. I have seen countless Snapchats in which it's captioned with a speed well above the speed limit. Some of these snaps are taken by the driver as they are pushing the pedal to the metal, which violates the hands-free law.

This is not to say that all teenagers who own luxury cars are like this. I am sure that there are kids that treat their cars with the respect that they deserve.

"Whenever I see a nice car, all I want to do is race it," said an unnamed student. "My car is made for these speeds," says another. Comments like these further demonstrate that teenagers are not mature enough to own a luxury car.

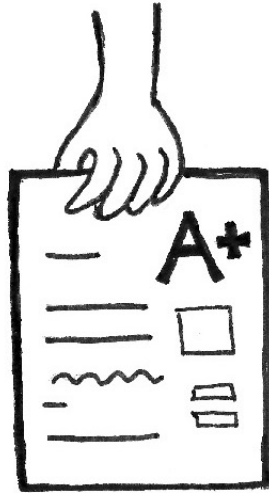
Even more bothersome is when Oyster River students flaunt their cars. No one wants to hear about how your car goes from 0-100 real quick, and it certainly doesn't make anyone hold you in higher esteem. Seeing a line of Audis parked in senior lot on Instagram or a Snapchat of the BMW steering wheel doesn't impress most.

As much as we'd all like to be whipping around in a BMW 420-X with a Megatron V9 turbo engine, this dream should be only achieved by people who have worked their whole lives to earn it.

- Dillon Mulhern



“What Did You Get?”



“Typically at other schools a C is an average grade, but I believe at Oyster River there is a notion that a C is bad,” explains student senate member Payal Nanda (‘16).

Oyster River takes pride in creating an academically rigorous environment, but this dynamic may perpetuate competitiveness among students. Is academic competitiveness driving students to succeed, or is it driving students to feel inadequate?

In order to comprehend this issue, it is necessary to grapple with the question of where this pressure is coming from. Oyster River has put an emphasis on how important grades have been since we came through the doors of the middle school as fifth graders. We have been told that doing well in middle school will prepare us for high school, which will determine where we go to college, and how well we do in college determines if we get a good job. Then that job will determine how much money we make, and our quality of life until we grow old and retire.

It is imperative to take a step back and realize that the point of standardized education is to allow the opportunities to explore the areas of study that one may develop an interest in, in hopes of finding a particular subject that will genuinely intrigue them. This being said, in such an academically rigorous environment, does this goal become lost when everyone around you is striving to be the best in the process? Grace Heine (‘16) explains the initial atmosphere at ORHS. “Everyone I have encountered cares a lot about how they do and sometimes it can feel like they need to succeed.” Although, if the pressure is to succeed, isn’t that a beneficial thing? Heine explains her view, stating, “I personally think the pressure I feel from other students encourages me, and since everyone wants to do well, I find that I also want them to do well too.”

ORHS alumna Emily Croot (‘15) was valedictorian of her class and has a similar opinion of how the competitiveness had affected her. She explains, “I felt so motivated by all the people around me, which helped inspire me to push a little harder each time I felt like giving up. It was a little daunting to have so many driven and hardworking students in competition, but watching them succeed motivated me to work harder.”

Although, for underclassmen adjusting to the environment at ORHS, the pressure may withhold students from doing their best. Gabby Hoag (‘19) explains, “Coming from the middle school, I was very surprised that the classes would be this hard. Not only are the classes difficult, but I feel a pressure to get good grades that I never felt in middle school. I was told by my parents to do well, but now when I hear my friends talk about their grades I feel like I need to at least match them.”

This introduces another aspect of the academic expectations at Oyster River. There seems to be a trend of sharing grades among students. I have been guilty myself, of asking someone how they did on a test. In hindsight, it shouldn’t matter to me,

but I use it as a gauge to predict how well I will do. It seems strange, but I get asked the same thing on a daily basis. Nanda notices a similar pattern, explaining, “There definitely is a lot of chatter about scores, and comparing scores. I get asked all of the time about how I do on certain assignments, and sometimes my friends joke around about my grades and taunt me when they do better than me.”

ORHS Counselor Heather Machanoff has noticed a similar trend. She explains, “We typically have an average GPA that is over 3.0 here at Oyster River, and students are frequently asking about their class rank and grades. When there is a constant comparison of grades, not effort/passion/determination, I think it certainly contributes to the feeling of pressure.”

Peter Dubois, an ORHS alumn explains, “There is not as much pressure to excel in most classes I take [at Keene State] compared to Oyster River. Most students here live by the phrase, “C’s get degrees”, which is understandable to an extent. Although I think the biggest difference is it’s all about self-motivation in college. Your drive to succeed is coming from just you, not your peers.”

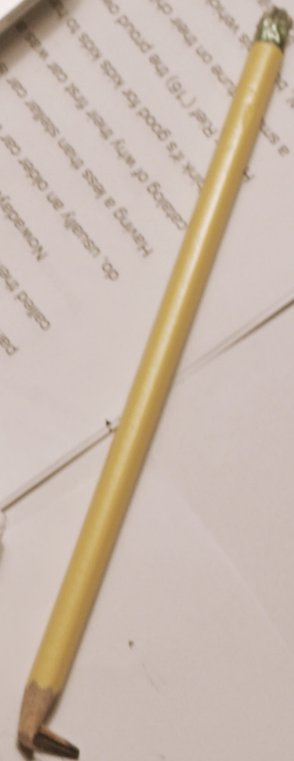
This peer pressure has a lot to do with Oyster River being a small school. Since it is such a tight-knit community, it allows for people to pick up on how others are doing, and subconsciously students then feel obligated to meet the standards set around them. Heine explains another possible reason, stating, “I think OR students are very grade driven. We live in a community where everyone is encouraged to try their best and succeed so there is a pressure to have ‘acceptable’ grades. Oyster River is also a very well-educated school and ‘acceptable’ grades tend to be higher than some other schools.”

Kennon Casper (‘16), a former ORHS student who transferred to Connell High School in Washington, explains the difference in environment. She states, “At Oyster River, I hated how competitive people were about grades and college. That is not what school should be about. That’s why I prefer school here, I am going through my life at a steady, unstressed pace, yet, I feel like I am learning a bunch about different topics.”

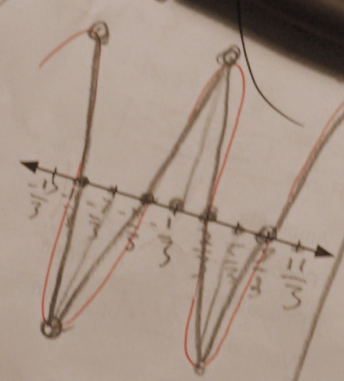
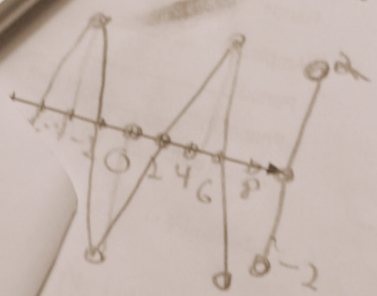
Croot explains in conclusion, “Whether it be good or bad, the academic competitiveness at Oyster River is fairly similar to the college I attend now. Although, at both ORHS and Union College I feel comfortable approaching other students about any of my questions and I know they will help me even if it means taking time away from their own studying.”

I also have noticed that although students want to do the best they can, it doesn’t mean they want others to fail. In this way, I believe the standards being high at Oyster River isn’t necessarily a bad thing, as long as the pressure isn’t just focused on grades but also on a student’s growth as a learner.

-Jessie Stelter



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TRIGONOMETRY
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